

Eng^d by A Halbert

Yours very sincerely
H More

From the Picture painted by Opie in 1786
now in the possession of Lady [illegible]

Pub^d by Harper & Brothers, New York

THE

Complete Works

OF

HANNAH MORE.



New-York

HARPER & BROTHERS, CLIFF STREE

1835

THE

WORKS

OF

HANNAH MORE.

FIRST COMPLETE AMERICAN EDITION.

I.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY HARPER & BROTHERS,

NO. 82 CLIFF-STREET,

AND SOLD BY THE PRINCIPAL BOOKSELLERS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES.

1837.

PUBLISHERS' ADDRESS.

WHEN the veil of mortality descends upon splendid genius, that has been long devoted to the instruction and best interests of mankind, the noblest monument that can be erected to commemorate its worth and perpetuate its usefulness, is the collection of those productions which, when separately published, delighted and edified the world.

No writer of the past or present age has equalled HANNAH MORE in the application of great talents to the improvement of society, through all its distinctions, from the humblest to the most exalted station in life. Her works have, indeed, in a very striking manner, and to an extraordinary extent, given a new and most important feature to the moral character of the nation she adorned. They have diffused vital religion, in faith and practice, over districts where its mere external form was before scarcely to be seen; and, what is still more deserving of admiration, this accomplished lady, by the power of her reasoning, and the elegance of her compositions, has succeeded, if the phrase may be permitted, in rendering piety fashionable and popular, where even the name of religion was, and that at no very distant period, treated with indifference, if not with absolute contempt.

After establishing her claim to the highest station in the temple of poetical fame, HANNAH MORE resolved to consecrate her talents wholly to His service from whom she had received them. This determination she carried into effect; and inconceivably great and extensive were the benefits it produced. When licentious principles began to be promulgated with industrious zeal, and to threaten the foundations of all moral and social order, then did this Christian heroine, armed in the panoply of truth, appear foremost to oppose the inroads of the enemies of righteousness. The success was unexampled. The tracts which, with uncommon celerity and admirable judgment, came from her fertile pen, operated like a charm, in confirming the wavering, and appalling the evil mind.

The venerable Bishop PORTEUS, in a charge delivered to the clergy of his diocess in 1798, having noticed the exertions made by different pious writers to excite the spirit of religion, says, "To these it would now be injustice not to add the name of another highly approved author, Mrs. HANNAH MORE; whose extraordinary and versatile talents can equally accommodate themselves to the cottage and the palace; who, while she is diffusing among the lower orders of the people an infinity of little religious tracts, calculated to reform and comfort them in this world, and to save them in the next, is at the same time applying all the powers of a vigorous and highly cultivated mind to the instruction, improvement, and high delight of the most exalted of her own sex. I allude more particularly to her last work, on female education, which presents to the reader such a fund of good sense, of wholesome counsel, of sagacious observation, of knowledge of the world and of the female heart, of high-toned morality, and genuine Christian piety; and all this enlivened with such brilliancy of wit, such richness of imagery, such variety and felicity of

allusion, such neatness and elegance of diction, as are not, I conceive, easily to be found so combined and blended together in any other work in the English language. Of the above-mentioned little tracts, no less than two millions were sold in the first year; and they contributed, I am persuaded, very essentially to counteract the poison of those impious and immoral pamphlets, which were dispersed over the kingdom in such numbers by societies of infidels and disaffected persons."

The popularity of Mrs. More's writings, never sensibly diminished, even by the vast increase of excellent and highly esteemed works in every department of literature by which the last twenty years have been distinguished, has been revived to an extent, perhaps, even greater than they achieved in the early period of their existence, by the recent publication of the admirable memoirs of her life and correspondence, prepared with so much skill and judgment by her chosen biographer and literary executor, Mr. Roberts; a work upon which the strongest language of approving criticism has been and still is bestowed by the highest authorities, both in this country and in England. The general acceptation with which those volumes were received, would have encouraged the publishers to follow them with an edition of Mrs. More's writings, even had they not been repeatedly advised and urged to the undertaking, not only by friends and in private, but by the almost united voice of the press throughout the Union. Had they not assumed it, with these inducements, they would have considered themselves as in some measure neglecting a duty, standing as they do in the light of caterers for the literary gratification of the public, whose wishes and opinions they are bound to respect, at least, if not implicitly to follow.

It is hoped and believed that the present collection, which contains all the writings of that eminent lady, in a convenient as well as handsome form, and is published at a very moderate price, will be received with a degree of favour not less cordial and extensive than that which was and still is accorded to the memoirs. To adopt the words of a religious periodical of high character, used in speaking of those volumes, it may be asserted that "it will please the superficial, improve the intelligent, and receive the hearty commendation of the serious reader. The young and the old, the lively and the sedate, will derive from it pleasure and profit."

The publishers cannot refrain from quoting the following just and happy expressions, from another publication devoted to the interests of religion. "But the view of her influence upon mankind will be exceedingly imperfect, unless we take into the estimate the whole number of individuals who have derived already, and will hereafter derive from her writings, the purest principles of religion, philosophy, and virtue. These can never be numbered, but they may safely be put down at millions. Now if all these readers gain but a single important suggestion, are incited to practise a single virtue, or to refrain from a single vice—if but one in ten is made wiser or better by her publications, how immeasurable is the good effected by her mind!"

"A soul thus active, spread out upon so wide a range of objects, impressing its own beauties and breathing its own spirit upon such myriads of kindred beings, demonstrates its own immortality, and proclaims in the history of the world the exhilarating truth, that the united acquisitions of piety, intellect, and virtue, centring their operations on that which is immortal, possess a grandeur which renders the conquests of pride and power insignificant as empty bubbles, and is more substantially glorious than the gorgeous enchantments of imperial magnificence."

PREFACE.



Whatever objections may be urged against the literary character of the present day, it must however be allowed to exhibit an evident improvement in some material points. It is for instance, no new observation, that vanity and flattery are now less generally ostensible even in the most indifferent authors than they were formerly in some of the best. The most self-sufficient writer is at length driven, by the prevailing sense of propriety, to be contented with *thinking* himself the prime genius of the age; but he seldom ventures to *tell* you that he thinks so. Vanity is compelled to acquire or to assume a better taste.

That spirit of independence also, which has in many respects impressed so mischievous a stamp on the public character, has perhaps helped to correct the style of prefaces and dedications. Literary patronage is so much *shorn of its beams*, that it can no longer enlighten bodies which are in themselves opake; so much abridged of its power that it cannot force into notice a work which is not able to recommend itself. The favour of an individual no longer boasts that buoyant quality which enables that to swim which by its own nature is disposed to sink. The influence of an Augustus, or a Louis Quatorze, of a Mæcenas, a Dorset, a Halifax, could not now procure readers, much less could it compel admirers for the panegyrist, if the panegyrist himself, could command admiration on no better ground than the authority of the patron. The once dilated preface is shrunk into plain apology or simple exposition. The long and lofty dedication (generally speaking) dwindled into a sober expression of respect for public virtue, a concise tribute of affection to private friendship, or an acknowledgment for personal obligation. It is no longer necessary for the dependant to be profane in order to be grateful. No more are all the divine attributes snatched from their rightful possessor, and impiously appropriated by the needy writer to the opulent patron. He still makes indeed the eulogium of his protector, but not his apotheosis. The vainest poet of our days dare not venture, like him who has however so gloriously accomplished his own prediction, to say, in so many words, that his own work is *more sublime than the royal heights of pyramids.* Nor whatever secret compact he may make for his duration, does he openly undertake to promise for his verse, that it shall flow *coequal with the rivers and survive the established forms of the religion of his country.* The most venal poetic parasite no longer assures his protector, with 'unhappy Dryden,' that mankind can no more subsist without *his* poetry (the earl of Middlesex's poetry!) than the world can subsist without the daily course of Divine Providence. And it is but justice to the more sober spirit of living literature to observe, that our modesty would revolt (putting our sense and our religion out of the question) were a modern poet to offer even an imperial patron to pick and choose his lodging among the constellations; or, as some author has expressed it on a similar occasion, 'to ask what apartment of the zodiack he would be pleased to occupy.'

So far at least our taste is reformed. And may we not venture to hope, from the affinity which should subsist between correct judgment and unadulterated principle, that our ideas of truth and manly integrity are improved also?

But it is time that I confine myself to the more immediate objects of the present address, in which, in avoiding the exploded evil I have been reprobating, I would not affectedly run into the opposite, and perhaps prevailing extreme.

It may not, it is presumed, be thought necessary to apologise for the publication of this collection, by enumerating all the reasons which produced it. 'Desire of friends,' is now become a proverbial satire; the poet is driven from that once creditable refuge, behind which an unfounded eagerness to appear in print used to shelter itself; and is obliged to abandon the untenable forts and fastnesses of this last citadel of affectation. Dr. Johnson's sarcasm upon one plea will apply to all, and put to flight the whole hackneyed train of false excuses—'If the book were not written to be printed, I presume it was printed to be read.'

These scattered pieces, besides that they had been suffered to pass through successive editions, with little or no correction, were in their original appearance, of all shapes and sizes, and utterly unreducable to any companionable form. Several new pieces are here added, and most of the old ones considerably altered and enlarged.

I should blush to produce so many slight productions of my early youth, did I not find reason to be still more ashamed, that after a period of so many years the progress will be found to have been so inconsiderable, and the difference so little apparent.

PREFACE.

If I should presume to suggest as an apology for having still persisted to publish, that of the latter productions, usefulness has been more invariably the object; whereas in many of the earlier, amusement was more obviously proposed; if I were inclined to palliate my presumption by pleading

That not in Fancy's maze I wander'd long;

it might be retorted that the implied plea, in favour of the latter publications, exhibits no sure proof of humility in this instance than in the other. That, if in the first it was no evidence of the modesty of the writer to fancy she could amuse, in the last it furnishes little proof of the modesty of the woman to fancy that she can instruct. Now to amuse, or to instruct, or both, is so undeniably the intention of all who obtrude their works on the public, that no preliminary apology, no prefatory humiliation can quite do away the charge of a certain consciousnes of talents which is implied in the very undertaking. The author professes his inability but he produces his book; and by the publication itself controverts his own avowal of alleged incapacity. It is to little purpose that the words are disparaging while the deed is assuming. Nor will that profession of self-abasement be much regarded, which is contradicted by an act that supposes self-confidence.

If however there is too seldom found in the writer of the book, all the humility which the preface announces, he may be allowed to plead on humility, which is at least comparative. On this ground may I be permitted to declare, that at no period of my life did I ever feel such unfeigned diffidence at the individual appearance of even the slightest pamphlet (the slenderness of whose dimensions might carry some excuse for the small proportion of profit or pleasure it conveyed) as I now feel at sending this, perhaps too voluminous, collection into the world. This self-distrust may naturally be accounted for, by reflecting that this publication is deliberately made, not only at a time of life when I ought best to know my own faults, and the faults of my writings; but is made also at such a distance from the moment in which the several pieces were first struck out, that the mind has had time to cool from the hurry and heat of composition; the judgment has had leisure to operate, and it is the effect of that operation to rectify false notions and to correct rash conclusions. The critic, even of his own works, grows honest, if not acute at the end of twenty years. The image, which he had fancied glowed so brightly when it came fresh from the furnace, time has quuenched; the spirits which he thought fixed and essential, have evaporated; many of the ideas which he imposed not only on his reader, but on himself, for originals, more reading and more observation compel him to restore to their owners. And having detected, from the perusal of abler works, either plagiarisms in his own, of which he was not aware, or coincidences which will pass for plagiarisms; and blending with the new judgment of the critic, the old indignation of the poet, who of us in this case is not angry with those who have *said our good things before us?* We not only discover that what we thought we had invented we have only remembered; but we find also that what we had believed to be perfect is full of defects; in that which we had conceived to be pure gold, we discover much tinsel. For the revision, as was observed above, is made at a period when the eye is brought by a due remoteness into that just position which gives a clear and distinct view of things; a remoteness which disperses 'the illusions of vision,' scatters the mists of vanity, reduces objects to their natural size, restores them to their exact shape, makes them appear to the sight, such as they are in themselves, and such as perhaps they have long appeared to all except the author.

That I have added to the mass of general knowledge by one original idea, or to the stock of virtue by one original sentiment, I do not presume to hope. But that I have laboured assiduously to make that kind of knowledge which is most indispensable to common life, familiar to the unlearned, and acceptable to the young; that I have laboured to inculcate into both, the love and practice of that virtue of which they had before derived the principles from higher sources, I will not deny to have attempted.

To what is called learning I have never had any pretension. Life and manners have been the objects of my unwearied observation, and every kind of study and habit has more or less recommended itself to my mind, as it had more or less reference to these objects. Considering this world as a scene of much action, and of little comparative knowledge; not as a stage for exhibition, or a retreat for speculation, but as a field on which the business which is to determine the concerns of eternity is to be transacted; as a place of low regard as an end; but of unspeakable importance as a means; a scene of short experiment, but lasting responsibility; I have been contented to pursue myself, and to present to others (to my own sex chiefly) those truths, which, if obvious and familiar, are yet practical, and of general application: things which if of little show, are yet of some use; and which, if their separate value be not great, yet their aggregate importance is not inconsiderable. I have pursued, not that which demands skill, and ensures renown, but

That which before us lies in daily life.

If I have been favoured with a measure of success, which has as much exceeded my expectation as my desert, I ascribe it partly to a disposition in the public mind to encourage, in these days of alarm, attack, and agitation, any productions of which the tendency is favourable to good order and Christian morals, even though the merit of the execution by no means keeps pace with that of the principle. In some instances I trust I have written seasonably when I have not been able to write well. Several pieces perhaps of small value in themselves have helped to supply in

some inferior degree the exigence of the moment; and have had the advantage, not of superseding the necessity, or the appearance, of abler writings, but of exciting abler writers; who, seeing how little I had been able to say on topics upon which much might be said, have more than supplied my deficiencies by filling up what I had only superficially sketched out. On that which had only a temporary use, I do not aspire to build a lasting reputation.

In the progress of ages, and after the gradual accumulation of literary productions, the human mind—I speak not of the scholar, or the philosopher, but of the multitude—the human mind, Athenian in this one propensity, *the desire to hear and to tell some new thing*, will reject, or over look, or grow weary even of the standard works of the most established authors; while it will peruse with interest the current volume or popular pamphlet of the day. This hunger after novelty, by the way, is an instrument of inconceivable importance placed by Providence in the hands of every writer; and should strike him forcibly with the duty of turning this sharp appetite to good account, by appeasing it with sound and wholesome aliment. It is not perhaps that the work in actual circulation is comparable to many works which are neglected; but it is *new*. And let the fortunate author militant, of moderate abilities, who is banquetting on his transient, and perhaps accidental popularity, use that popularity wisely; and, bearing in mind that he himself must expect to be neglected in his turn, let him thankfully seize his little season of fugitive renown; let him devote his ephemeral importance, conscientiously to throw into the com mon stock his quota of harmless pleasure or of moral profit. Let him unaffectedly rate his humble, but not unuseful labours, at their just price, nor despondingly conclude that he has written altogether in vain, though he do not see a public revolution of manners succeed, as he had perhaps too fondly flattered himself, to the publication of his book. Let him not despair, if, though he have had many readers, he has had but few converts. Nor let him on the other hand be elated by a celebrity which he may owe more to his novelty than to his genius, more to a happy combination in the circumstances of the times, than to his own skill or care;—and most of all, to his having diligently observed, that

There is a tide in the affairs of men;

and to his having, accordingly, launched his bark at the favourable flow.

The well intentioned and well principled author, who has uniformly thrown all his weight, though that weight be but small, into the right scale, may have contributed his fair proportion to that great work of reformation, which will, I trust, unless a total subversion of manners should take place, be always carrying on in the world; but which the joint concurrence of the wisdom of ages will find it hard to accomplish. Such an author may have been in his season and degree, the accepted agent of that Providence who works by many and different instruments, by various and successive means; in the same manner as in the manual labour of the mechanic, it is not by a few ponderous strokes that great operations are effected, but by a patient and incessant following up of the blow—by reiterated and unwearied returns to the same object; in the same manner as in the division of labour, many hands of moderate strength and ability may, by co-operation, do that which a very powerful individual might have failed to accomplish. It is the privilege of few authors to contribute largely to the general good, but almost every one may contribute something. No book perhaps is perfectly neutral; nor are the effects of any altogether indifferent. From all our reading there will be a bias on the actings of the mind, though with a greater or less degree of inclination, according to the degree of impression made, by the nature of the subject, the ability of the writer, and the disposition of the reader. And though, as was above observed, the whole may produce no *general* effect, proportionate to the hopes of the author; yet some truth may be picked out from among many that are neglected; some single sentiment may be seized on for present use; some detached principle may be treasured up for future practice.

If in the records of classic story we are told, that 'the most superb and lasting monument that was ever consecrated to beauty, was that to which every lover carried a tribute;' then among the accumulated production of successive volumes, those which though they convey no new information, yet illustrate on the whole some old truth; those which though they add nothing to the stores of genius or of science, yet if they help to establish and enforce a single principle of virtue, they may be accepted as an additional mite cast by the willing hand of affectionate indigence into the treasury of Christian morals.

The great father of Roman eloquence has asserted, that though every man should propose to himself the highest degrees in the scale of excellence; yet he may stop with honour at the second or the third. Indeed the utility of some books to some persons would be defeated by their very superiority. The writer may be above the reach of his reader; he may be too lofty to be pursued; he may be too profound to be fathomed; he may be too abstruse to be investigated; for to produce delight there must be intelligence; there must be something of concert and congruity. There must be not merely that intelligibility which arises from the perspicuousness of the author: but that also which depends on the capacity and perception of the reader. Between him who writes and him who reads, there must be a kind of coalition of interests, something of a partnership (however unequal the capital) in mental property; a sort of joint stock of tastes and ideas. The student must have been initiated into the same intellectual commerce with him whom he studies; for large bills are only negotiable among the mutually opulent.

There are perhaps other reasons why popularity is no infallible test of excellence. Many readers even of good faculties if those faculties have been kept inert by a disuse of exertion, feel often most

sympathy with writers of a middle class; and find more repose in a mediocrity [illegible] amuses the mind, than with a loftiness and extent which exalts and expands it. To enjoy works of superlative ability, as was before suggested, the reader must have been accustomed to drink at the same spring from which the writer draws; he must be at the expense of furnishing part of his own entertainment, by bringing with him a share of the science or of the spirit with which the author writes.

These are some of the considerations, which, while my gratitude has been excited by the favourable reception of my various attempts, have helped to correct that vanity which is so easily kindled where merit and success are evidently disproportionate.

For fair criticism I have ever been truly thankful. For candid correction, from whatever quarter it came, I have always exhibited the most unquestionable proof of my regard, by adopting it. Nor can I call to mind any instance of improvement which has been suggested to me by which I have neglected to profit.* I am not insensible to human estimation. To the approbation of the wise and good I have been perhaps but two sensible. But I check myself in the indulgence of the dangerous pleasure, by recollecting that the hour is fast approaching to all, to me it is *very* fast approaching, when no human verdict, of whatever authority in itself, and however favourable to its object, will avail any thing, but inasmuch as it is crowned with the acquittal of that Judge whose favour is eternal life. Every emotion of vanity dies away, every swelling of ambition subsides before the consideration of this solemn responsibility. And though I have just avowed my deference for the opinion of private critics, and of public censors; yet my anxiety with respect to the sentence of both is considerably diminished, by the reflection, that not the writings but the writer will very soon be called to another tribunal, to be judged on far other grounds than those on which the decisions of literary statutes are framed: a tribunal, at which the sentence passed will depend on far other causes than the observation or neglect of the rules of composition; than the violation of any precepts, or the adherence to any decrees of critic legislation.

With abundant cause to be humbled at the mixed motives of even my least exceptionable writings, I am willing to hope that in those of later date, at least, vanity, has not been the governing principle. And if in sending abroad the present collection, some sparks of this inextinguishable fire should struggle to break out, let it be at once quenched by the reflection, that of those persons whose kindness stimulated, and whose partiality rewarded, my early efforts; of those who would have dwelt on these pages with most pleasure, the eyes of the greater part are closed, to open no more in this world. Even while the pen is in my hand framing this remark, more than one affecting corroboration of its truth occurs. May this reflection, at once painful and salutary, be ever at hand to curb the insolence of success, or to countervail the mortification of defeat! May it serve to purify the motives of action, while it inspires resignation to its event! And may it affect both without diminishing the energies of duty—without abating the activity of labour.

Bath, 1801.

* If it be objected that this has not been the case with respect to one single passage which has excited some controversy, it has arisen not from any want of openness to conviction in me, but from my conceiving myself to have been misunderstood, and, for that reason only, misrepresented.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.



THE PUPPET-SHOW:

A TALE.

A noble earl!—the name I spare,
From reverence to the living heir—
Lov'd pleasure; but to speak the truth,
Not much refinement grac'd the youth.
The path of pleasure which *he* trod
Was somewhat new, and rather odd;
For, that he haunted park or play,
His house's archives do not say;
Or that more modish joys he felt,
And would in opera transports melt;
Or that he spent his morning's prime
In Bond-street bliss till dinner-time:
No treasur'd anecdotes record
Such pastimes pleas'd the youthful lord.
One single taste historians mention,
A fact unmingled with invention;
It was a taste you'll think, I fear,
Somewhat peculiar for a peer,
Though the rude democratic pen
Pretends that peers are only men.
Whatever town or country fair
Was advertised, my lord was there.
'Twas not to purchase or to sell—
Why went he then? The Muse shall tell.
At fairs he never fail'd to find
The joy congenial to his mind.
This dear diversion would you know?
What was it? 'twas a puppet-show!
Transported with the mimic art,
The wit of Punch enthrall'd his heart,
He went, each evening, just at six,
When Punch exhibited his tricks;
And, not contented every night
To view this object of delight,
He gravely made the matter known
He must and would have Punch his own;
For if, exclaims the noble lord,
Such joys these *transient* views afford
If I receive such keen delight
From a short visit every night,
'Tis fair to calculate what pleasure
Will spring from *owning* such a treasure.
I need not for amusement roam,
I shall have always Punch at home.
He rav'd with this new fancy bit,
Of Punch's sense and Punch's wit.
Not more Narcissus long'd to embrace
The watery mirror's shadowy face;
Not more Pygmalion long'd to claim
Th' unconscious object of his flame;
Than long'd the enamour'd legislator
To purchase this delightful creature.
Each night he regularly sought him,
Nor did he rest till he had bought him.
Soon he accomplishes the measure,
And pays profusely for the treasure:
He bids them pack the precious thing
So careful not to break a spring;
So anxious not to bruise a feature,
His own new coach must fetch the creature!
He safely brought the idol home,
And lodg'd beneath his splendid dome,
All obstacles at length surmounted,
My lord on perfect pleasure counted.

If you have feelings, guess you may,
How glad he passed the live long day.
His eating room he makes the station
Of his new favourite's habitation.
'Convivial Punch!' he cried, 'to-day,
Thy genius shall have full display!
How shall I laugh to hear thy wit
At supper nightly as I sit!
And how delightful as I dine,
To hear some sallies, Punch, of thine!'
Next day, at table, as he sat,
Impatient to begin the chat,
Punch was produc'd; but Punch, I trow,
Divested of his puppet-show,
Was nothing, was a thing of wires,
Whose sameness disappoints and tires.
Depriv'd of all eccentric aid,
The empty idol was betray'd.
No artful hand to pull the springs,
And Punch no longer squeaks or sings.
Ah me! what horror seiz'd my lord,
'Twas paint, 'twas show, 'twas pasted-board'
He marvell'd why the pleasant thing
Which could such crowds together bring;
Which charm'd him when the show was full!
At home should be so very dull.
He ne'er suspected 'twas the scenery,
He never dreamt 'twas the machinery;
The lights, the noise, the tricks, the distance,
Gave the dumb idol this assistance.
Preposterous peer! far better go
To thy congenial puppet-show;
Than buy, divested of its glare,
The empty thing which charm'd thee there.
Be still content abroad to roam,
For Punch exhibits not at home.
The moral of the tale I sing
To modern matches home I bring
Ye youths, in quest of wives who go
To every crowded puppet-show;
If, from these scenes, you choose for life
A dancing, singing, dressing wife;
O marvel not at home to find
An empty figure, void of mind;
Stript of her scenery and garnish,
A thing of paint, and paste, and varnish.
Ye candidates for earth's best prize,
Domestic life's sweet charities!
If long you've stray'd from Reason's way,
Enslav'd by fashion's wizard sway;
If by her witcheries still betray'd,
You wed some vain fantastic maid;
Snatch'd, not *selected*, as you go,
The heroine of the puppet-show;
In every outward grace refin'd,
And destitute of nought but mind;
If skill'd in ev'ry polish'd art,
She wants simplicity of heart;
On her for bliss if you depend,
Without the means you seek the end.
You seek, o'erturning nature's laws,
A consequence without a cause;
A downward pyramid you place,
The point inverted for the base.

Blame your own work, not fate; nor rail
If bliss so ill secur'd should fail.
'Tis after fancied good to roam,
'Tis bringing Punch to live at home.
And you, bright nymphs! who bless our eyes,
With all that art, that taste supplies;
Learn that accomplishments, at best,
Are but the garnish of life's feast;
And tho' your transient guests may praise
Your showy board on gala days:
Yet, while you treat each frippery sinner
With mere deserts, and call 'em dinner,
Your lord who *lives* at home, still feels
The want of more substantial meals;
Of sense and worth, which every hour
Enlarge Affection's growing power;
Of worth, not emulous to praise,
Of sense, not kept for gala days.
O! in the highest, happiest lot,
By woman be it ne'er forgot,
That human life's no Isthmian game,
Where sports and shows must purchase fame.
Tho' at the puppet-show he shone,
Punch was poor company alone.
Life is no round of jocund hours,
Of garlands gay, and festive bowers;
Even to the young, to whom I sing,
Its serious business life will bring.
Tho' bright the suns which now appear
To gild your cloudless atmosphere,
Oft, unawares, some direful storm,
Serenest skies may soon deform;
In dim Affliction's dreary hour
The flash of mirth must lose its power;
Whilst faith a constant light supplies,
And virtue cheers the darkest skies.
To bless the matrimonial hours
Must three joint leaders club their powers,
GOOD-NATURE, PIETY, and SENSE,
Must their confederate aids dispense.
As the soft powers of oil assuage
Of ocean's waves the furious rage;
Lull to repose the boiling tide,
And the rough billows bid subside;
Till every angry motion sleep,
And softest tremblings hush the deep:
Good-nature! thus thy charms controul
The tumults of the troubled soul:
By labour worn, by care opprest,
On thee the wearied head shall rest;
From business and distraction free,
Delighted, shall return to thee;
To thee the aching heart shall cling,
And find that peace it does not bring.
And while the light and empty fair,
Form'd for the ball-room's dazzling glare
Abroad, of speech, so prompt and rapid,
At home, so vacant and so vapid;
Of every puppet-show the life,
At home, a dull and tasteless wife;—
The mind with sense and knowledge stor'd
Can counsel, or can soothe its lord;
His varied joys or sorrows feel,
And share the pains it cannot heal.
But, *Piety!* without thy aid,
Love's fairest prospects soon must fade.
Blest architect! rear'd by thy hands,
Connubial Concord's temple stands.
Tho' Wit, tho' Genius, raise the pile,
Tho' Taste assist, tho' Talents smile,
Tho' Fashion, while her wreaths she twine,
Her light Corinthian columns join;
Still the frail structure Fancy rears,
A tottering house of cards appears;
Some sudden gust, nor rare the case,
May shake the building to its base,
Unless, bless'd Piety! thou join
Thy keystone to ensure the shrine;
Unless, to guard against surprises,
On thy broad arch the temple rises.

THE BAS BLEU; OR, CONVERSATION.

ADDRESSED TO MRS. VESEY

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following trifle owes it birth and name to the mistake of a foreigner of distinction who gave the literal appellation of the *Bas-bleu* to a small party of friends, who had been often called, by way of pleasantry, the *Blue Stockings*. These little societies have been sometimes misrepresented. They were composed of persons distinguished, in general for their rank, talents, or respectable character, who met frequently at Mrs. Vesey's, and at a few other houses, for the sole purpose of conversation, and were different in no respect from other parties, but that the company did not play at cards.

May the author be permitted to bear her grateful testimony (which will not be suspected of flattery, now that most of the persons named in this poem are gone down to the grave) to the many pleasant and instructive hours she had the honour to pass in this company; in which learning was as little disfigured by pedantry, good taste as little tinctured by affectation, and general conversation as little disgraced by calumny, levity, and the other censurable errors with which it is too commonly tainted, as has perhaps been known in any society.

VESEY! of verse the judge and friend!
Awhile my idle strain attend:
Not with the days of early Greece,
I mean to ope my slender piece;
The rare Symposium to proclaim
Which crown'd th' Athenian's social name;
Or how ASPASIA's parties shone,
The first *Bas-bleu* at Athens known;
Where SOCRATES unbending sat,
With ALCIBIADES in chat;

And PERICLES vouchsafed to mix
Taste, wit, and mirth, with politics.
Nor need I stop my tale to show,
At least to readers such as you,
How all that Rome esteem'd polite,
Supp'd with LUCULLUS every night;
LUCULLUS, who, from Pontus come,
Brought conquests, and brought cherries home.
Name but the suppers in th' Apollo,
What classics images will follow!
How wit flew round, while each might take
Conchylia from the Lucrine lake;
And Attic salt; and Garum sauce,
And lettuce from the isle of Cos;
The first and last from Greece transplanted,
Us'd here—because the rhyme I wanted:
How pheasant's heads, with cost collected,
And phennicopters stood neglected.
To laugh at SCIPIO's lucky hit,
POMPEY's bon-mot, or CÆSAR's wit!
Intemperance, list'ning to the tale,
Forgot the mullet growing* stale;
And Admiration balanc'd, hung
'Twixt PEACOCKS' brains, and TULLY's tongue.
I shall not stop to dwell on these,
But be as epic as I please,
And plunge at once *in medias res*
To prove the privilege I plead,
I'll quote from Greek I cannot read;
Stunn'd by Authority, you yield,
And I, not Reason, keep the field.
Long was Society o'er-run
By Whist, that desolating Hun;
Long did Quadrille despotic sit,
That vandal of colloquial Wit:
And conversation's setting light
Lay half-obscur'd in Gothic night;
At length the mental shades decline,
Colloquial Wit begins to shine;
Genius prevails, and Conversation
Emerges into *Reformation.*
The vanquish'd triple crown to you,
BOSCAWEN sage, bright MONTAGU,
Divided, fell;—your cares in haste
Rescued the ravag'd realms of Taste;
And LYTTLETON's accomplished name,
And witty PULTNEY shar'd the fame;
The men, not bound by pedant rules,
Nor ladies† *Precieuses ridicules;*
For polish'd WALPOLE show'd the way,
How wits may be both learn'd and gay;
And CARTER taught the female train,
The deeply wise are never vain;
And she whom SHAKSPEARE's wrongs redrest,
Prov'd that the brightest are the best.
This just deduction still they drew,
And well they practis'd what they knew;
Nor taste, nor wit, deserves applause,
Unless still true to critic laws;
Good sense, of faculties the best,
Inspire and regulate the rest,
O! how unlike the wit that fell,
RAMBOUILLET!‡ at thy quaint hotel;
Where point, and turn, and equivoque
Distorted every word they spoke!
All so intolerably bright,
Plain Common Sense was put to flight;
Each speaker, so ingenious ever,
'Twas tiresome to be quite so clever;
There twisted Wit forgot to please,
And Mood and Figure banish'd ease;
No votive altar smok'd to thee,
Chaste queen, divine Simplicity!
But forc'd Conceit, which ever fails,
And stiff Antithesis prevails·
Uneasy Rivalry destroys
Society's unlaboured joys:
NATURE, of stilts and fetters tir'd,
Impatient from the wits retir'd,
Long time the exile, houseless stray'd
'Till SEVIGNE receiv'd the maid.
Though here she comes to bless our isle,
Not universal is her smile.
Muse! snatch the lyre which CAMBRIDGE strung,
When he the *empty ball-room* sung;
'Tis tun'd above thy pitch, I doubt,
And thou no music would'st draw out;
Yet, in a lower note, presume
To sing the full dull drawing room.‡
Where the dire *circle* keeps its station,
Each common phrase is an oration;
And cracking fans, and whisp'ring misses,
Compose their conversation blisses.
The matron marks the goodly show,
While the tall daughter eyes the beau—
The frigid beau! ah! luckless fair,
'Tis not for you that studied air;
Ah! not for you that sidelong glance,
And all that charming nonchalance;
Ah; not for you the three long hours
He worship'd the 'cosmetic powers;'
That finish'd head which breathes perfume,
And kills the nerves of half the room;
And all the murders meant to lie
In that large, languishing, gray eye;
Desist;—less wild th' attempt would be,
To warm the snows of Rhodope:
Too cold to feel, too proud to feign,
For him you're wise and fair in vain;
In vain to charm him you intend,
Self is his object, aim, and end.
Chill shade of that affected peer,
Who dreaded mirth, come safely here!
For here no vulgar joy effaces
Thy rage for polish, ton, and graces.
Cold Ceremony's leaden hand,
Waves o'er the room her poppy wand;
Arrives the stranger; every guest
Conspires to torture the distrest:
At once they rise—so have I seen—
You guess the similie I mean,
Take what comparison you please,
The crowded streets, the swarming bees,
The pebbles on the shore that lie,

* Seneca says, that in his time the Romans were arrived at such a pitch of luxury, that the mullet was reckoned stale which did not die in the hands of the guest.

† See *Moliere's* comedy.

‡ The society at the hotel de *Rambouillet*, though composed of the most polite and ingenious persons in France, was much tainted with affectation and false taste. See *Voiture, Menage*, &c,

The late earl of *Mansfield* told the author that when he was ambassador at Paris, he was assured that it had not been unusual for those persons of a purer taste who frequented these assemblies, to come out from their society so weary of wit and laboured ingenuity, that they used to express the comfort they felt in their emancipation, by saying, "*Allons! faisons des so lecismes!*"

* These grave and formal parties now scarcely exist, having been swallowed up in the reigning multitudinous assemblies.

The stars which form the galaxy;
These serve t' embellish what is said,
And show, besides, that one has read;—
At once they rise—th' astonish'd guest
Back in a corner slinks, distrest;
Scar'd at the many bowing round,
And shock'd at her own voice's sound,
Forgot the thing she meant to say,
Her words, half-uttered die away;
In sweet oblivion down she sinks,
And of her next appointment thinks.
While her loud neighbour on the right,
Boasts what she has to do to-night,
So very much, you'd swear her pride is
To match the labours of ALCIDES;
'Tis true, in hyperbolic measure,
She nobly calls her labours *Pleasure;*
In this unlike ALCMENA's son,
She never means they should be done;
Her fancy of no *limits* dreams,
No *ne plus ultra* stops her schemes;
Twelve! she'd have scorn'd the paltry round,
No pillars would have mark'd her bound;
CALPE and ABYLA, in vain
Had nodded cross th' opposing main;
A circumnavigator she
On Ton's illimitable sea.
We pass the pleasures vast and various,
Of routs, not social, but gregarious;
Where high heroic self-denial
Sustains her self-inflicted trial.
Day lab'rers! what an easy life,
To feed ten children and a wife!
No—I may juster pity spare
To the *night* lab'rer's keener care;
And, pleas'd, to gentler scenes retreat,
Where *Conversation* holds her seat.
Small were that art which would ensure
The circle's boasted quadrature!
See VESEY's* plastic genius make
A circle every figure take;
Nay, shapes and forms, which would defy
All science of Geometry;
Isosceles, and parallel,
Names, hard to speak, and hard to spell!
The enchantress wav'd her hand, and spoke!
Her potent wand the circle broke;
The social spirits hover round,
And bless the liberated ground.
Here, rigid CATO, awful sage!
Bold censor of a thoughtless age,
Once dealt his pointed moral round,
And, not unheeded, fell the sound;
The Muse his honour'd memory weeps,
For CATO now with ROSCIUS sleeps!
Here once HORTENSIUS† lov'd to sit,
Apostate now from social wit:
Ah! why in wrangling senates waste
The noblest parts, the happiest taste?
Why democratic thunders wield,
And quit the Muses' calmer field?
Ask you what charms this gift dispense?
'Tis the strong spell of COMMON SENSE:
Away dull Ceremony flew,
And with her bore Detraction too.

Nor only geometric art,
Does this presiding power impart;
But chymists too, who want the essence
Which makes or mars all coalescence,
Of her the secret rare might get,
How different kinds amalgamate:
And he, who wilder studies chose,
Finds here a new metempsychose;
How forms can other forms assume,
Within her Pythagoric room;
Or be, and stranger is th' event,
The very things which Nature meant;
Nor strive by art and affectation.
To cross their genuine destination.
Here sober duchesses are seen,
Chaste wits, and critics void of spleen;
Physicians, fraught with real science,
And whigs and tories in alliance;
Poets, fulfilling Christian duties,
Just lawyers, reasonable beauties;
Bishops who preach, and peers who pay:
And countesses who seldom play;
Learn'd antiquaries, who from College,
Reject the rust, and bring the knowledge;
And, hear it, *Age*, believe it, *Youth*,—
Polemics, really seeking truth;
And travellers of that rare tribe,
Who've *seen* the countries they describe;
Who study'd there, so strange their plan,
Not plants, nor herbs alone, but man;
While travellers, of other notions,
Scale mountain tops, and traverse oceans;
As if so much these themes engross,
The study of mankind, was moss.
Ladies who point, nor think me partial,
An epigram as well as MARSHALL;
Yet in all female worth succeed,
As well as those who cannot read.
Right pleasant were the task, I ween,
To name the groups which fill the scene;
But rhymes of such fastidious nature,
She proudly scorns all nomenclature,
Nor grace our northern names her lips,
Like HOMER's catalogue of ships.
Once—faithful Memory! heave a sigh,
Here ROSCIUS gladdened every eye.
Why comes not Maro? Far from town,
He rears the urn to Taste, and BROWN,
Plants cypress round the tomb of GRAY,
Or decks his *English garden* gay;
Whose mingled sweets exhale perfume,
And promise a perennial bloom.
Taste thou the gentler joys they give,
With HORACE and with LELIUS live.
Hail, CONVERSATION, soothing power,
Sweet goddess of the social hour!
Not with more heartfelt warmth, at least,
Does LELIUS bend, thy true high priest;
Than I the lowest of thy train,
These field-flowers bring to deck thy fane;
Who to thy shrine like him can haste,
With warmer zeal, or purer taste?
O may thy worship long prevail,
And thy true votaries never fail!
Long may thy polish'd altars blaze
With wax-lights' undiminish'd rays!
Still be thy nightly offering paid,
Libations large of lemonade!
On silver vases, loaded, rise
The biscuits' ample sacrifice!

* This amiable lady was remarkable for her talent in breaking the formality of a circle, by inviting her parties to form themselves into little separate groups.

† This was written in the year 1787, when Mr. Edmund Burke had joined the then opposition.

Nor be the milk white streams forgot
Of thirst-assuaging, cool orgeat;
Rise, incense pure from fragrant tea,
Delicious incense, worthy thee!
Hail, Conversation, heav'nly fair,
Thou bliss of life, and balm of care!
Still may thy gentle reign extend,
And Taste with Wit and Science blend.
Soft polisher of rugged man!
Refiner of the social plan!
For thee, best solace of his toil!
The sage consumes his midnight oil!
And keeps late vigils, to produce
Materials for thy future use.
Calls forth the else neglected knowledge,
Of school, of travel, and of college.
If none behold, ah! wherefore fair?
Ah wherefore wise, if none must hear?
Our intellectual ore must shine,
Not slumber, idly, in the mine.
Let Education's moral mint
The noblest images imprint;
Let Taste her curious touchstone hold,
To try if standard be the gold;
But 'tis thy commerce Conversation,
Must give it use by circulation;
That noblest commerce of mankind,
Whose precious merchandise is MIND!
What stoic traveller would try
A sterile soil, and parching sky,
Or bear th' intemp'rate northern zone,
If what he saw must ne'er be known?
For this he bids his home farewell;
The joy of seeing is to tell.
Trust me, he never would have stirr'd,
Were he forbid to speak a word;
And Curiosity would sleep,
If her own secrets she must keep
The bliss of telling what is past
Becomes her rich reward at last.
Who mock'd at death, and danger smile,
To steal one peep at father Nile;
Who, at Palmyra risk his neck,
Or search the ruins of Balbeck;
If these must hide old Nilus' fount,
Nor Lybian tales at home recount;
If those must sink their learned labour,
Nor with their ruins treat a neighbour?
Range—study—think—do all we can,
Colloquial pleasures are for man.
Yet not from low desire to shine
Does Genius toil in Learning's mine;
Not to indulge in idle vision,
But strike new light by strong collision.
Of CONVERSATION, Wisdom's friend,
This is the object and the end,
Of moral truth man's proper science,
With sense and learning in alliance,
To search the depths, and thence produce
What tends to practice and to use.
And next in value we shall find
What mends the taste and forms the mind;
If high those truths in estimation,
Whose search is crown'd with demonstration;
To these assign no scanty praise,
Our taste which clears, our views which raise.
For grant the mathematic truth
Best balances the mind of youth;
Yet scarce the truth of Taste is found
To grow from principles less sound.
O'er books the mind inactive lies,
Books, the mind's food, not exercise?
Her vigorous wings she scarcely feels,
'Till use the latent strength reveals;
Her slumbering energies call'd forth,
She rises, conscious of her worth;
And, at her new-found powers elated,
Thinks them not rous'd, but new created.
Enlighten'd spirits! you, who know
What charms from polish'd converse flow,
Speak, for you can, the pure delight
When kindling sympathies unite;
When correspondent tastes impart
Communion sweet from heart to heart
You ne'er the cold gradations need
Which vulgar souls to union lead;
No dry discussion to unfold
The meaning caught ere well 'tis told:
In taste, in learning, wit, or science,
Still kindled souls demand alliance:
Each in the other joys to find
The image answering to his mind.
But sparks electric only strike
On souls electrical alike;
The flash of intellect expires,
Unless it meet congenial fires:
The language to th' elect alone
Is, like the mason's mystery known
In vain th' unerring sign is made
To him who is not of the *trade.*
What lively pleasure to divine,
The thought implied, the hinted line,
To feel Allusion's artful force,
And trace the image to it's source!
Quick Memory blends her scatter'd rays,
'Till Fancy kindles at the blaze;
The works of ages start to view,
And ancient Wit elicits new.
But wit and parts if thus we praise,
What noble altars should we raise,
Those sacrifices could we see
Which Wit, O Virtue! makes to thee:
At once the rising thought to dash,
To quench at once the bursting flash!
The shining Mischief to subdue,
And lose the praise, and pleasure too!
Tho' Venus' self, could you detect her,
Imbuing with her richest nectar,
The thought unchaste—to check that thought,
To spurn a fame so dearly bought;
This is high Principle's controul!
This is true continence of soul!
Blush, heroes, at your cheap renown,
A vanquish'd realm, a plunder'd town!
Your conquests were to gain a name,
This conquest triumphs over fame;
So pure its essence, 'twere destroy'd
If known, and if commended, void.
Amidst the brightest truths believ'd
Amidst the fairest deeds achiev'd,
Shall stand recorded and admir'd,
That Virtue sunk what Wit inspir'd!
But let the letter'd and the fair,
And, chiefly, let the wit beware;
You, whose warm spirits never fail,
Forgive the hint which ends my tale.
O shun the perils which attend
On wit, on warmth, and heed your friends;
Tho' Science nurs'd you in her bowers,
Tho' Fancy crown your brow with flowers,

Each thought, tho' bright Invention fill,
Tho' Attic bees each word distil;
Yet, if one gracious power refuse
Her gentle influence to infuse;
If she withhold her magic spell,
Nor in the social circle dwell;
In vain shall listening crowds approve,
They'll praise you, but they will not love.
What is this power, you're loth to mention,
This charm, this witchcraft? 'tis ATTENTION:
Mute angel, yes; thy look dispense
The silence of intelligence;
Thy graceful form I well discern,
In act to listen and to learn,
'Tis thou for talents shalt obtain
That pardon Wit would hope in vain;
Thy wond'rous power, thy secret charm,
Shall Envy of her sting disarm;
Thy silent flattery soothes our spirit,
And we forgive eclipsing merit;
Our jealous souls no longer burn,
Nor hate thee, tho' thou shine in turn;
The sweet atonement screens the fault,
And love and praise are cheaply bought.
With mild complacency to hear,
Tho' somewhat long the tale appear,—
The dull relation to attend,
Which mars the story you could mend;
'Tis more than wit, 'tis moral beauty,
'Tis pleasure rising out of duty.
Nor vainly think, the time you waste,
When temper triumphs over taste.

BISHOP BONNER'S GHOST.

THIS little poem was never before published. A few copies were printed by the late earl of Orford at his press at Strawberry-hill, and given to a few particular friends.

THE ARGUMENT.

In the gardens of the palace of Fulham is a dark recess; at the end of this stands a chair, which once belonged to bishop BONNER.—A certain bishop of London, more than two hundred years after the death of the aforesaid BONNER. one morning just as the clock of the Gothic chapel had struck six, undertook to cut with his own hand a narrow walk through this thicket, which is since called the *Monk's-walk.* He had no sooner begun to clear the way, than lo! suddenly up-started from the chair the ghost of bishop BONNER, who, in a tone of just and bitter indignation, uttered the following verses.

REFORMER, hold! ah, spare my shade,
Respect the hallow'd dead!
Vain pray'r! I see the op'ning glade,
See utter darkness fled.
Just so your innovating hand
Let in the moral light;
So, chas'd from this bewilder'd land,
Fled intellectual night.
Where now that holy gloom which hid
Fair Truth from vulgar ken?
Where now that wisdom which forbid
To think that monks were men?
The tangled mazes of the schools,
Which spread so thick before;
Which knaves entwin'd to puzzle fools,
Shall catch mankind no more.
Those charming intricacies where?
Those venerable lies?
Those legends, once the church's care?
Those sweet perplexities?
Ah! fatal age, whose sons combin'd
Of credit to exhaust us:
Ah! fatal age, which gave mankind
A LUTHER and a FAUSTUS!*
Had only JACK and MARTIN† liv'd,
Our pow'r had slowly fled;
Our influence longer had surviv'd,
Had layman never read.

* The same age which brought heresy into the church, unhappily introduced printing among the arts, by which means the Scriptures were unluckily disseminated among the vulgar.

† How bishop *Bonner* came to have read *Swift's* Tale of a Tub it may now be in vain to inquire.

For knowledge flew, like magic spell,
By typographic art;
Oh, shame! a peasant now can tell
If priests the truth impart.
Ye councils, pilgrimages, creeds
Synods, decrees, and rules!
Ye warrants of unholy deeds,
Indulgences and bulls!
Where are ye now? and where, alas?
The pardons we dispense!
And penances, the sponge of sins;
And Peter's holy pence?
Where now the beads that used to swell
Lean Virtue's spare amount?
Here only faith and goodness fill
A heretic's account.
But soft—what gracious form appears
Is this a convent's life!
Atrocious sight! by all my fears,
A prelate with a wife!
Ah! sainted MARY,* not for this
Our pious labour's join'd;
The witcheries of domestic bliss
Had shook ev'n GARDNER's mind,
Hence all the sinful, human ties,
Which mar the cloister's plan;
Hence all the weak fond charities,
Which makes man feel for man.
But tortur'd Memory vainly speaks
The projects we design'd;

* An orthodox queen of the sixteenth century, who laboured with might and main, conjointly with these two venerable bishops to extinguish a dangerous heresy ycleped the Reformation.

While this apostate bishop seeks
  The freedom of mankind.
Oh, born in ev'ry thing to shake
  The systems plann'd by me!
So heterodox, that he would make
  Both soul and body free.
Nor clime nor colour stay his hand;
  With charity deprav'd,
He would from Thames to Gambia's strand,
  Have all be free and sav'd.
And who shall change his wayward heart
  His wilful spirit turn?
For those his labours can't convert,
  His weakness will not burn. *

A GOOD OLD PAPIST.

Ann. Dom. 1900.

*** By the lapse of time the three last stanzas are become unintelligible. Old chronicles say, that towards the latter end of the 18th century, a bill was brought into the British parliament, by an active young reformer, for the abolition of a pretended traffic of the human species. But this only shows how little faith is to be given to the exaggerations of history; for as no vestige of this incredible trade now remains, we look upon the whole story to have been one of those fictions, not uncommon among authors, to blacken the memory of former ages.

FLORIO.

A TALE FOR FINE GENTLEMEN AND FINE LADIES.

IN TWO PARTS.

TO THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.*

My Dear Sir,——It would be very flattering to me, if I might hope that the little tale, which I now take the liberty of presenting to you, could amuse a few moments of your tedious indisposition. It is, I confess, but a paltry return for the many hours of agreeable information and elegant amusement which I have received from your spirited and very entertaining writings: yet I am persuaded, that you will receive it with favour, as a small offering of esteem and gratitude; as an offering of which the intention alone makes all the little value.

The slight verses, sir, which I place under your protection, will not, I fear, impress the world with a very favourable idea of my poetical powers; But I shall, at least, be suspected of having some taste, and of keeping good company, when I confess that some of the pleasantest hours of my life have been passed in your conversation. I should be unjust to your very engaging and well-bred turn of wit, if I did not declare that, among all the lively and brilliant things I have heard from you, I do not remember ever to have heard an unkind or an ungenerous one. Let me be allowed to bear my feeble testimony to your temperate use of this charming faculty, so delightful in itself, but which can only be safely trusted in such hands as yours, where it is guarded by politeness, and directed by humanity.

I have the honour to be, sir, your much obliged,
and most obedient, humble servant,

January, 27, 1786. THE AUTHOR.

* Afterwards Earl of Orford.

PART I.

Florio, a youth of gay renown,
Who figur'd much about the town,
Had pass'd, with general approbation,
The modish forms of education;
Knew what was proper to be known,
Th' establish'd jargon of bon-ton;
Had learnt, with very moderate reading,
The whole new system of good breeding:
He studied to be bold and rude.
Tho' native feeling would intrude:
Unlucky sense and sympathy,
Spoilt the vain thing he strove to be.
For Florio was not meant by nature,
A silly or a worthless creature:
He had a heart dispos'd to feel,
Had life and spirit taste and zeal;
Was handsome, generous; but by fate,
Predestin'd to a large estate!
Hence, all that grac'd his op'ning days,
Was marr'd by pleasure, spoilt by praise.
The Destiny, who wove the thread
Of Florio's being, sigh'd, and said,
'Poor youth! this cumbrous twist of gold,
More than my shuttle well can hold,
For which thy anxious father toil'd,
Thy white and even thread has spoil'd:
'Tis this shall warp thy pliant youth
From sense, simplicity and truth,
Thy erring fire, by wealth mislead,
Shall scatter pleasures round thy head,
When wholesome discipline's controul,
Should brace the sinews of thy soul;
Coldly thou'lt toil for Learning's prize,
For why should he that's rich be wise?
  The gracious Master of mankind,
Who knew us vain, corrupt and blind,
In mercy, tho' in anger said,
That man should earn his daily bread
His lot, inaction renders worse,
While labour mitigates the curse.

The idle, life's worst burthens bear,
And meet, what toil escapes, despair!
Forgive, nor lay the fault on me,
This mixture of mythology;
The muse of Paradise has deign'd
With truth to mingle fables feign'd;
And tho' the bard, who would attain
The glories, MILTON, of thy strain,
Will never reach thy style or thoughts,
He may be like thee in thy faults!
Exhausted FLORIO, at the age,
When youth should rush on glory's stage;
When life should open fresh and knew,
And ardent Hope her schemes pursue;
Of youthful gaiety bereft,
Had scarce an unbroach'd pleasure left;
He found already to his cost,
The shining gloss of life was lost;
And Pleasure was so coy a prude,
She fled the more, the more pursu'd;
Or if, o'ertaken and caress'd,
He loath'd and left her when possess'd.
But FLORIO knew the world that science
Sets sense and learning at defiance;
He thought the world to him was known,
Whereas he only knew the town;
In men this blunder still you find,
All think their little set—mankind.
Tho' high renown the youth had gain'd,
No flagrant crimes his life had stain'd,
No tool of falsehood, slave of passion,
But spoilt by CUSTOM, and the FASHION.
Tho' known among *a certain set*,
He did not like to be in debt;
He shudder'd at the dicer's box,
Nor thought it very heterodox,
That tradesmen should be sometimes paid,
And bargains kept as well as made.
His growing credit as a sinner,
Was that he lik'd to spoil a dinner;
Made pleasure and made business wait,
And still, by system, came too late;
Yet, 'twas a hopeful indication,
On which to forund a reputation;
Small habits well pursu'd betimes,
May reach the dignity of crimes.
And who a juster claim preferr'd,
Than one who always broke his word!
His mornings were not spent in vice,
'Twas lounging, sauntering, eating ice:
Walk up and down St. James's-street,
Full fifty times the youth you'd meet:
He hated cards, detested drinking,
But stroll'd to shun the toil of thinking;
'Twas doing nothing was his curse,
Is there a vice can plague us worse?
The wretch who digs the mine for bread,
Or ploughs, that others may be fed,
Feels less fatigued than that decreed
To him who cannot think, or read.
Not all the peril of temptations,
Not all the conflict of the passions,
Can quench the spark of glory's flame,
Or quite extinguish virtue's name;
Like the true taste for genuine saunter,
Like sloth, the soul's most dire enchanter.
The active fires that stir the breast,
Her poppies charm to fatal rest,
They rule in short and quick succession,
But SLOTH keeps one long, fast possession;
Ambition's reign is quickly clos'd,
Th' usurper rage is soon depos'd;
Intemperance, where there's no temptation,
Makes voluntary abdication;
Of other tyrants short the strife,
But INDOLENCE is king for life.
The despot twists with soft control,
Eternal fetters round the soul.
Yet tho' so polish'd FLORIO's breeding,
Think him not ignorant of reading;
For he to keep him from the vapours,
Subscrib'd at HOOKHAM'S, saw the papers
Was deep in poet's corner wit;
Knew what was in italics writ;
Explain'd fictitious names at will,
Each gutted syllable could fill;
There oft, in paragraphs, his name
Gave symptom sweet of growing fame;
Tho' yet they only serv'd to hint
That FLORIO lov'd to see in print,
His ample buckles' alter'd shape,
His buttons chang'd, his varying cape.
And many a standard phrase was his
Might rival *bore*, or banish *quiz*;
The man who grasps this young renown,
And early starts for Fashion's crown;
In time that glorious prize may wield,
Which clubs, and ev'n Newmarket yield.
He studied while he dress'd, for true 'tis,
He read *compendiums*, *extracts*, *beauties*,
Abreges, *dictionaries*, *recueils*,
Mercures, *journaux*, *extracts*, and *feuilles*,
No work in substance now is follow'd,
The chemic extract only's swallow'd.
He lik'd those literary cooks
Who skim the cream of other's books;
And ruin half an author's graces,
By plucking bon-mots from their places;
He wonders any writing sells,
But these spic'd mushrooms and morells
His palate these alone can touch,
Where every mouthful is *bonne bouche*.
Some phrase, that with the public took,
Was all he read of any book;
For plan, detail, arrangement, system,
He let *them* go, and never miss'd 'em.
Of each new play he saw a part,
And all the *anas* had by heart;
He found whatever they produce
Is fit for conversation-use;
Learning so ready for display,
A page would prime him for a day;
They cram not with a mass of knowledge,
With smacks of toil, and smells of college,
Which in the memory useless lies,
Or only makes men—good and wise.
This might have merit once indeed,
But now for other ends we read.
A friend he had, BELLARIO hight,
A reasoning, reading, learned wight;
At least, with men of FLORIO's breeding
He was a prodigy of reading.
He knew each stale and vapid lie
In tomes of French philosophy;
And then, we fairly may presume,
From PYRRHO down to DAVID HUME,
'Twere difficult to single out
A man more full of shallow doubt;
He knew the little sceptic prattle,
The sophist's paltry arts of battle:

Talk'd gravely of th' Atomic dance,
Of moral fitness, fate, and chance;
Admir'd the system of LUCRETIUS,
Whose matchless verse makes nonsense specious!
To this his doctrine owes its merits,
Like pois'nous reptiles kept in spirits.
Tho' sceptics dull his scheme rehearse,
Who have not souls to taste his verse.
BELLARIO founds his reputation
On dry stale jokes, about creation;
Would prove, by argument circuitous,
The combination was fortuitous.
Swore priests' whole trade was to deceive,
And prey on bigots who believe;
With bitter ridicule could jeer,
And had the true free-thinking sneer.
Grave arguments he had in store,
Which have been answer'd o'er and o'er;
And us'd, with wond'rous penetration
The trite, old trick of false citation;
From ancient authors fond to quote
A phrase or thought they never wrote.
Upon his highest shelf there stood
The classics neatly cut in wood;
And in a more commodious station,
You found them in a French translation:
He swears, 'tis from the Greek he quotes,
But keeps the French—just for the notes.
He worshipp'd certain modern names
Who history write in epigrams,
In pointed periods, shining phrases,
And all the small poetic daisies,
Which crowd the pert and florid style,
Where fact is dropt to raise a smile;
Where notes indecent or profane
Serve to *raise* doubts, but not *explain*:
Where all is spangle, glitter, show,
And truth is overlaid below:
Arts scorn'd by History's sober muse,
Arts CLARENDON disdain'd to use.
Whate'er the subject of debate,
'Twas larded still with sceptic prate;
Begin whatever theme you will,
In unbelief he lands you still;
The good, with shame I speak it, feel
Not half this proselyting zeal:
While cold their master's cause to own
Content to go to heaven alone;
The infidel in liberal trim,
Would carry all the world with him:
Would treat his wife, friend, kindred, nation,
Mankind—with what! Annihilation.
Tho' FLORIO did not quite believe him,
He thought, why should a friend deceive him?
Much as he priz'd BELLARIO's wit,
He liked not all his notions yet;
He thought him charming, pleasant, odd,
But hop'd one might believe in God;
Yet such the charms that grac'd his tongue,
He knew not how to think him wrong.
Tho' FLORIO tried a thousand ways,
Truth's insuppressive torch would blaze;
Where once her flame has burnt, I doubt
If ever it go fairly out.
Yet, under great BELLARIO's care,
He gain'd each day a better air;
With many a leader of renown,
Deep in the learning of the town,
Who never other science knew,
But what from that prime source they drew;
Pleas'd, to the opera they repair,
To get recruits of knowledge there;
Mythology gain at a glance,
And learn the classics from a dance:
In OVID they ne'er car'd a groat,
How far'd the vent'rous ARGONAUT;
Yet charm'd they see MEDEA rise
On fiery dragons to the skies.
For DIDO,* tho' they never knew her
As MARO's magic pencil drew her,
Faithful and fond, and broken-hearted,
Her pious vagabond departed;
Yet, for DIDONE how they roar
And *Cara! Cara!* loud encore.
One taste, BELLARIO's soul possess'd
The master passion of his breast;
It was not one of those frail joys,
Which, by possession, quickly cloys
This bliss was solid, constant, true,
'Twas action, and 'twas passion too
For tho' the business might be finish'd,
The pleasure scarcely was diminish'd;
Did he ride out, or sit, or walk,
He liv'd it o'er again in talk;
Prolong'd the fugitive delight,
In words by day, in dreams by night,
'Twas *eating* did his soul allure,
A deep, keen, modish epicure;
Tho' once this name, as I opine,
Meant not such men as live to dine;
Yet all our modern wits assure us,
That's all *they* know of EPICURUS:
They fondly fancy, that repletion
Was the *chief good* of that fam'd Grecian.
To live in gardens full of flowers,
And talk Philosophy in bowers,
Or, in the covert of a wood,
To descant on the *sovereign good*,
Might be the notion of their founder,
But they have notions vastly sounder;
Their bolder standards they erect,
To form a more substantial sect;
Old EPICURUS would not own 'em,
A dinner is *their summum bonum.*
More like you'll find such sparks as these,
To EPICURUS' deities;
Like them they mix not with affairs,
But loll and laugh at human cares.
To beaux this difference is allow'd,
They choose a sofa for a cloud;
BELLARIO had embrac'd with glee,
This practical philosophy.
Young FLORIO's father had a friend,
And ne'er did heaven a worthier send;
A cheerful knight of good estate,
Whose heart was warm, whose bounty great
Where'er his wide protection spread,
The sick were cheer'd, the hungry fed;
Resentment vanish'd where he came;
And lawsuits fled before his name;
The old esteem'd, the young caress'd him,
And all the smiling village bless'd him,
Within his castle's Gothic gate,
Sat Plenty, and old-fashioned state:
Scarce Prudence could his bounties stint;—
Such characters are out of print;
O! would kind heav'n, the age to mend,

* *Medea* and *Dido* were the two reigning operas at this time.

A new edition of them send,
Before our tottering castles fall,
And swarming nabobs seize on all!
Some little whims he had, 'tis true,
But they were harmless, and were few;
He dreaded nought like alteration,
Improvement still was innovation;
He said, when any change was brewing,
Reform was a fine name for ruin;'*
This maxim firmly he would hold,
'*That* always must be good that's old.'
The acts which dignify the day
He thought portended its decay:
And fear'd twould show a falling state,
If STERNHOLD should give way to TATE.
The church's downfall he predicted,
Were modern tunes not interdicted;
He scorn'd them all, but crown'd with palm
The man who set the hundredth psalm.
Of moderate parts, of moderate wit,
But parts for life and business fit:
Whate'er the theme; he did not fail,
At popery and the French to rail;
And started wide, with fond digression
To praise the protestant succession.
Of BLACKSTONE he had read a part,
And all BURN'S JUSTICE knew by heart.
He thought man's life too short to waste
On idle things call'd wit and taste.
In books that he might lose no minute,
His very verse had business in it.
He ne'er had heard of bards of GREECE,
But had read half of DYER'S FLEECE.
His sphere of knowledge still was wider,
His Georgics, 'PHILIPS upon cider:'
He could produce in proper place,
Three apt quotations from the 'Chase,'†
And in the hall, from day to day,
Old ISAAC WALTON'S *Angler* lay.
This good and venerable knight
One daughter had, his soul's delight:
For face no mortal could resist her,
She smil'd like HEBE'S youngest sister;
Her life, as lovely as her face,
Each duty mark'd with every grace;
Her native sense improv'd by reading,
Her native sweetness by good-breeding:
She had perus'd each choicer sage
Of ancient date, or later age;
But her best knowledge still she found
On sacred, not on classic ground;
'Twas thence her noblest stores she drew,
And well she practis'd what she knew.
Led by Simplicity divine,
She pleas'd, and never tried to shine;
She gave to chance each unschool'd feature,
And left her cause to sense and nature.
The sire of FLORIO, ere he died,
Decreed fair CELIA FLORIO'S bride
Bade him his latest wish attend,
And win the daughter of his friend:
When the last rites to him were paid,
He charg'd him to address the maid:
Sir GILBERT'S heart the wish approv'd
For much his ancient friend he lov'd.
Six rapid months like lightning fly,
And the last gray was now thrown by;
FLORIO reluctant, calls to mind
The orders of a sire too kind:
Yet go he must; he must fulfil
The hard conditions of the will:
Go, at that precious hour of prime,
Go, at that swarming, bustling time,
When the full town to joy invites,
Distracted with its own delights;
When Pleasure pours from her full urn,
Each tiresome transport in its turn;
When Dissipation's altars blaze,
And men run mad a thousand ways;
When, on his tablets, there were found
Engagements for full six weeks round;
Must leave, with grief and desperation,
Three packs of cards of invitation,
And all the ravishing delights
Of slavish days, and sleepless nights.
Ye nymphs, whom tyrant Power drags down,
With hand despotic from the town,
When ALMACK'S doors wide open stand,
And the gay partner's offer'd hand
Courts to the dance; when steaming rooms,
Fetid with ungents and perfumes,
Invite you to the mobs polite
Of three sure balls in one short night
You may conceive what FLORIO felt,
And sympathetically melt;
You may conceive the hardship dire
To lawns and woodlands to retire,
When, freed from Winter's icy chain,
Glad Nature revels on the plain;
When blushing Spring leads on the Hours,
And May is prodigal of flow'rs;
When Fashion warbles thro' the grove,
And all is song, and all is love;
When new-born breezes sweep the vale,
And Health adds fragrance to the gale.

PART II.

SIX bays unconscious of their weight,
Soon lodg'd him at Sir GILBERT'S gate·
His trusty Swiss, who flew still faster,
Announc'd th' arrival of his master:
So loud the rap which shook the door,
The hall re-echo'd to the roar;
Since first the castle walls were rear'd
So dread a sound had ne'er been heard;
The din alarm'd the frighten'd deer,
Who in a corner slunk for fear,
The butler thought 'twas beat of drum,
The steward swore the French were come;
It ting'd with red poor FLORIO'S face,
He thought himself in Portland-place.
Short joy! he enter'd, and the gate
Clos'd on him with its ponderous weight.
Who, like Sir GILBERT, now was blest?
With rapture he embrac'd his guest.
Fair CELIA blush'd, and FLORIO utter'd
Half sentences, or rather mutter'd
Disjointed words—as, 'honour! pleasure!
'Kind!—vastly good, ma'am!—beyond measure:
Tame expletives, with which dull fashion
Fills vacancies of sense and passion.
Yet, tho' disciple of cold art,
FLORIO soon found he had a heart;

* These lines were written many years before the French revolution had in a manner realized Sir *Gilbert's* idea of *reform*.

† A poem by Mr. Somerville

He saw; and but that admiration
Had been too active, too like passion;
Or had he been to *Ton* less true,
Cupid had shot him thro' and thro';
But, vainly speeds the surest dart,
Where FASHION's mail defends the heart;
The shaft her cold repulsion found,
And fell without the pow'r to wound:
For FASHION, with a mother's joy,
Dipp'd in her lake the darling boy;
That lake, whose chilling waves impart
The gift to freeze the warmest heart:
Yet guarded as he was with phlegm,
With such delight he ey'd the dame,
Found his cold heart to melt before her,
And felt so ready to adore her;
That FASHION fear'd her son would yield,
And flew to snatch him from the field;
O'er his touch'd heart her ægis threw,
The goddess mother straight he knew;
Her power he own'd, she saw and smil'd,
And claim'd the triumph of her child.
CELIA a table still supplied,
Which modish luxury might deride:
A modest feast the hope conveys,
The master eats on other days;
While gorgeous banquets oft bespeak
A hungry household all the week.
A decent elegance was there,
And Plenty with her liberal air.
But vulgar Plenty gave offence,
And shock'd poor FLORIO's nicer sense;
Patient he yielded to his fate,
When good Sir GILBERT pil'd his plate;
He bow'd submissive, made no question,
But that 'twas sovereign for digestion;
But, such was his unlucky whim,
Plain meats would ne'er agree with him;
Yet feign'd to praise the Gothic treat,
And, if he ate not, seem'd to eat.
In sleep sad FLORIO hop'd to find,
The pleasures he had left behind.
He dreamt, and lo! to charm his eyes,
The form of WELTJE* seem'd to rise;
The gracious vision wav'd his wand,
And banquets sprung to FLORIO's hand;
Th' imaginary savours rose
In tempting odours to his nose.
A bell, not Fancy's false creation,
Gives joyful 'note of preparation:'
He starts, he wakes, the bell he hears;
Alas! it rings for morning pray'rs.
But how to spend next tedious morning,
Was past his possible discerning;
Unable to amuse himself,
He tumbled every well-ranged shelf;
This book was dull, and that was wise,
And this was monstrous as to size,
With eager joy he gobbled down
Whate'er related to the town;
Whate'er look'd small, whate'er look'd new
Half-bound, or stitch'd in pink or blue;
Old play-bills, ASTLEY's last year's feats,
And Opera disputes in sheets.
As these dear records meet his eyes,
Ghosts of departed pleasures rise;
He lays the book upon the shelf,
And leaves the day to spend itself.
To cheat the tedious hours, whene'er

* A celebrated cook and confectioner.

He sallied forth to take the air,
His sympathetic ponies knew
Which way their lord's affections drew,
And, every time he went abroad,
Sought of themselves the London road;
He ask'd each mile of every clown,
How far they reckon'd it to town?
And still his nimble spirits rise,
Whilst thither he directs his eyes;
But when his coursers back he guides
The sinking mercury quick subsides.
A week he had resolv'd to stay
But found a week in every day;
Yet if the gentle maid was by,
Faint pleasure glisten'd in his eye;
Whene'er she spoke, attention hung
On the mild accents of her tongue;
But when no more the room she grac'd,
The slight impression was effac'd.
Whene'er Sir GILBERT's sporting guests
Retail'd old news, or older jests,
FLORIO, quite calm, and debonair,
Still humm'd a new Italian air;
He did not even feign to hear 'em,
But plainly show'd he could not bear 'em.
CELIA perceived his secret thoughts,
But like the youth with all his faults;
Yet 'twas unlike, she softly said,
The tales ot love which she had read,
Where heroes vow'd, and sigh'd, and knelt;
Nay, 'twas unlike the love she felt;
Tho' when her sire the youth would blame,
She clear'd his but suspected fame,
Ventur'd to hope, with fault'ring tongue,
'He would reform—he was but young;'
Confess'd his manners wrong in part,
'But then—he had so good a heart!'
She sunk each fault, each virtue rais'd,
And still where truth permitted, prais'd;
His interest farther to secure,
She prais'd his bounty to the poor
For, votary as he was of art,
He had a kind and melting heart;
Tho', with a smile, he us'd to own
He had no *time* to feel in town;
Not that he blush'd to show compassion,—
It chanc'd that year to be the fashion.
And equally the modish tribe,
To clubs or hospitals subscribe.
At length, to wake ambition's flame,
A letter from BELLARIO came;
Announcing the supreme delight,
Preparing for a certain night,
By FLAVIA fair, return'd from France,
Who took him captive at a glance:
The invitations all were given!
Five hundred cards!—a little heaven!
A dinner first—he would present him,
And nothing, nothing must prevent him,
Whoever wish'd a noble air,
Must gain it by an *entree* there;
Of all the glories of the town,
'Twas the first passport to renown,
Then ridicul'd his rural schemes,
His pastoral shades, and purling streams;
Sneer'd at his present *brilliant* life,
His polish'd sire, and high-bred wife
Thus, doubly to inflame, he tried,
His curiosity and pride.
The youth, with agitated heart,

Prepar'd directly to depart;
But, bound in honour to obey
His father at no distant day;
He promis'd soon to hasten down,
Tho' business call'd him now to town;
Then faintly hints a cold proposal—
But leaves it to the knight's disposal—
Stammer'd half words of love and duty,
And mutter'd much of—'worth and beauty;'
Something of passion then he dropt,
'And hop'd his *ardour*'—Here he stopt;
For some remains of native truth
Flush'd in his face, and check'd the youth;
Yet still th' ambiguous suffusion,
Might pass for artless love's confusion.
The doating father thought 'twas strange,
But fancied men like times might change;
Yet own'd, nor could he check his tongue,
It was not so when he was young.
That was the reign of love he swore,
Whose halcyon days are now no more.
  In that blest age, for honour fam'd,
Love paid the homage Virtue claim'd;
Not that insipid, daudling Cupid,
With heart so hard, and air so stupid,
Who coldly courts the charms which lie
In Affectation's half-clos'd eye.
Love then was honest, genuine passion,
And manly gallantry the fashion;
Yet pure as ardent was the flame
Excited by the beauteous dame;
Hope could subsist on slender bounties,
And suitors gallop'd o'er two counties,
The ball's fair partner to behold,
Or humbly hope—she caught no cold.
  But mark how much Love's annals mend!
Should beauty's goddess now descend;
On some adventure should she come,
To grace a modish drawing-room;
Spite of her form and heavenly air,
What beau would hand her to a chair?
Vain were that grace, which to her son,
Disclos'd what Beauty had not done:
Vain were that motion which betray'd,
The goddess was no earth-born maid;
If noxious FARO's baleful spright,
With rites infernal rul'd the night,
The group absorb'd in play and pelf,
VENUS might call her doves herself.
  As FLORIO pass'd the castle-gate,
His spirits seem to lose their weight;
He feasts his lately vacant mind
With all the joys he hopes to find;
Yet on whate'er his fancy broods,
The form of CELIA still intrudes;
Whatever other sound he hears,
The voice of CELIA fills his ears;
Howe'er his random thoughts might fly,
Her graces dance before his eye;
Nor was the obtrusive vision o'er,
E'en when he reach'd BELLARIO's door.
The friends embrac'd with warm delight,
And FLAVIA's praises crown'd the night.
  Soon dawn'd the day which was to show,
Glad FLORIO what was heaven below.
FLAVIA, admir'd wherever known,
Th' acknowledg'd empress of bon-ton;
O'er FASHION's wayward kingdom reigns,
And holds BELLARIO in her chains;
Various her powers; a wit by day,
By night unmatch'd for lucky play.
The flattering, fashionable tribe,
Each stray bon-mot to her ascribe;
And all her 'little senate' own
She made the best *charade* in town;
Her midnight suppers always drew
Whate'er was fine, whate'er was new;
There oft the brightest fame you'd see
The victim of a repartee;
For Slander's priestess still supplies
The SPOTLESS for the sacrifice.
None at her polish'd table sit,
But who aspire to modish wit,
The *persiflage*, th' unfeeling jeer,
The civil, grave, ironic sneer;
The laugh which more than censure wounds
Which, more than argument, confounds,
There the fair deed, which would engage
The wonder of a nobler age,
With unbelieving scorn is heard,
Or still to selfish ends refer'd;
If in the deed no flaw they find,
To some base motive 'tis assign'd
When Malice longs to throw her dart,
But finds no vulnerable part,
Because the Virtues all defend,
At every pass, their guarded friend;
Then by one slight insinuation,
One scarce perceiv'd exaggeration;
Sly Ridicule, with half a word,
Can fix her stigma of—absurd;
Nor care, nor skill, extracts the dart,
With which she stabs the feeling heart;
Her cruel caustics inly pain,
And scars indelible remain.
  Supreme in wit, supreme in play,
Despotic Flavia all obey;
Small were her natural charms of face,
Till heighten'd with each foreign grace;
But what subdued Bellario's soul
Beyond Philosophy's control,
Her constant table was as fine
As if ten rajahs were to dine;
She every day produc'd such fish as
Would gratify the nice APICIUS,
Or realize what we think fabulous
I' th' bill of fare of HELIOGABALUS.
Yet still the natural taste was cheated,
'Twas delug'd in some sauce one hated.
'Twas sauce! 'twas sweetmeat! 'twas confection!
All poignancy! and all perfection!
Rich *entremets*, whose name none knows,
Ragouts, *tourtes*, *tendrons*, *fricandeux*,
O' th' hogs of EPICURUS' sty;
Yet all so foreign and so fine,
'Twas easier to admire, than dine.
O! if the muse had power to tell
Each dish, no muse has power to spell
Great goddess of the French *Cuisine!*
Not with unhallow'd hands I mean
To violate thy secret shade,
Which eyes profane shall ne'er invade;
No! of thy dignity supreme,
I, with 'mysterious reverence,' deem!
Or, should I venture with rash hand,
The vulgar would not understand;
None but th' initiated know
The raptures keen thy rights bestow.
Thus much to tell I lawful deem,
Thy works are never what they seem;

Thy will this general law has past,
That nothing of itself shall taste.
Thy word this high decree enacted,
'In all be nature counteracted!'
Conceive, who can, the perfect bliss,
For 'tis not given to all who guess,
The rapturous joy BELLARIO found,
When thus his ev'ry wish was crown'd.
To FLORIO, as the best of friends,
One dish he secretly commends
Then hinted, as a special favour,
What gave it that delicious flavour;
A mystery he so much reveres,
He never to unhallow'd ears
Would trust it, but to him would show
How far true friendship's power would go.
FLORIO, tho' dazzled by the *fete*,
With far inferior transport eat;
A little warp his taste had gain'd,
Which, unperceived, till now remain'd;
For, from himself he would conceal
The change he did not choose to feel;
He almost wish'd he could be picking
An unsophisticated chicken;
And when he cast his eyes around,
And not one simple morsel found,
O give me, was his secret wish,
My charming CELIA's plainest dish!
Thus Nature, struggling for her rights,
Lets in some little, casual lights:
And Love combines to war with Fashion,
Tho' yet 'twas but an infant passion;
The practis'd FLAVIA tried each art
Of sly attack to steal his heart;
Her forc'd civilities oppress,
Fatiguing thro' mere graciousness:
While many a gay intrepid dame,
By bold assault essay'd the same.
Fill'd with disgust, he strove to fly
The artful glance and fearless eye;
Their jargon now no more he praises,
Nor echoes back their flimsy phrases.
He felt not CELIA's powers of face,
Till weigh'd against *bon-ton* grimace;
Nor half her genuine beauties tasted,
'Till with factitious charms contrasted;
Th' industrious carpies hover'd round,
Nor peace nor liberty he found!
By force and flattery circumvented,
To play, reluctant, he consented;
Each dame her power of pleasing tried,
To fix the novice by her side,
Of *pigeons* he the very best,
Who wealth with ignorance possest.
But FLAVIA's rhetoric best persuades,
That sybil leads him to the shades;
The fatal leaves around the room,
Prophetic tell the approaching doom!
Yet, different from the tale of old,
It was the fair one pluck'd the gold;
Her arts the pond'rous purse exhaust;
A thousand borrow'd, stak'd, and lost,
Wakes him to sense and shame again,
Nor force, nor fraud could more obtain.
He rose, indignant, to attend
The summons of a ruin'd friend,
Whom keen BELLARIO's arts betray
To all the depths of desperate play;
A thoughtless youth who near him sat,
Was plunder'd of his whole estate;
Too late he call'd for FLORIO's aid,
A beggar in a moment made.
And now, with horror, FLORIO views
The wild confusion which ensues;
Marks how the dames, of late so fair,
Assume a fierce demoniac air;
Marks where the infernal furies hold
Their orgies foul o'er heaps of gold;
And spirits dire appear to rise,
Guarding the horrid mysteries;
Marks how deforming passions tear
The bosoms of the losing fair;
How looks convuls'd, and haggard faces,
Chase the scar'd Loves, and frighten'd Graces!
Touch'd with disdain, with horror fir'd,
CELIA! he murmur'd, and retir'd.
That night no sleep his eyelids prest,
He thought; and thought's a foe to rest:
Or if, by chance, he clos'd his eyes,
What hideous spectres round him rise!
Distemper'd Fancy wildly brings
The broken images of things;
His ruin'd friend, with eye-ball fixt,
Swallowing the draught Despair had mixt;
The frantic wife beside him stands,
With bursting heart, and wringing hands;
And every horror dreams bestow,
Of pining want or raving wo.
Next morn, to check, or cherish thought,
His library's retreat he sought;
He view'd each book, with cold regard,
Of serious sage, or lighter bard;
At length, among the motley band,
The IDLER fell into his hand;
Th' alluring title caught his eye,
It promis'd cold inanity:
He read with rapture and surprise,
And found 'twas pleasant, tho' 'twas wise:
His tea grew cold, whilst he, unheeding,
Pursu'd this reasonable reading.
He wonder'd at the change he found,
Th' elastic spirits nimbly bound;
Time slipt, without disgust, away,
While many a card unanswer'd lay:
Three papers, reeking from the press,
Three pamphlets thin, in azure dress,
Ephemeral literature well known,
The lie and scandal of the town;
Poison of letters, morals, time!
Assassin of our day's fresh prime!
These, on his table, half the day,
Unthought of, and neglected lay.
FLORIO had now full three hours read,
Hours which he us'd to waste in bed;
His pulse beat virtue's vigorous tone,
The reason to himself unknown;
And if he stopped to seek the cause,
Fair CELIA's image filled the pause.
And now, announc'd BELLARIO's name
Had almost quench'd the new-born flame:
'Admit him,' was the ready word
Which first escap'd him, not unheard
When sudden, to his mental sight,
Uprose the horrors of last night;
His plunder'd friend before him stands,
And—'not at home,' his firm commands.
He felt the conquest as a joy
The first temptation would destroy.
He knew next day that Hymen's hand,
Would tack the slight and slippery band,

Which, in loose bondage, would ensnare
Bellario bright and Flavia fair.
Oft had he promis'd to attend
The nuptials of his happy friend:
To go—to stay—alike he fears;
At length a bolder flight he dares:
To Celia he resolves to fly,
And catch fresh virtue from her eye,
Though three full weeks did yet remain,
Ere he engag'd to come again.
This plan he tremblingly embrac'd,
With doubtful zeal, and fluttering haste;
Nor ventur'd he one card to read,
Which might his virtuous scheme impede;
Each note, he dreaded might betray him,
And shudder'd lest each rap should stay him.
Behold him seated in his chaise;
With face that self distrust betrays;
He hazards not a single glance,
Nor through the glasses peeps by chance,
Lest some old friend, or haunt well known,
Should melt his resolution down.
Fast as his foaming coursers fly,
Hyde-park attracts his half-rais'd eye;
He steals one fearful, conscious look,
Then drops his eye upon his book.
Triumphant he persists to go;
But gives one sigh to *Rotten-row.*
Long as he view'd Augusta's tow'rs,
The sight relax'd his thinking pow'rs;
In vain he better plans revolves,
While the soft scene his soul dissolves;
The tow'rs once lost, his view he bends,
Where the receding smoke ascends;
But when nor smoke, nor tow'rs arise,
To charm his heart or cheat his eyes;
When once he got entirely clear
From this enfeebling atmosphere;
His mind was brac'd, his spirits light,
His heart was gay, his humour bright.
Thus feeling, at his inmost soul,
The sweet reward of self-controul,
Impatient now, and all alive,
He thought he never should arrive;
At last he spies Sir Gilbert's trees;
Now the near battlements he sees;
The gates he enter'd with delight,
And, self-announc'd, embrac'd the knight:
The youth his joy unfeign'd exprest,
The knight with joy receiv'd his guest,
And own'd, with no unwilling tongue,
'Twas done like men when he was young.
Three weeks subducted, went to prove,
A feeling like old-fashion'd love.
For Celia, not a word she said,
But blush'd, 'celestial, rosy red!'
Her modest charms transport the youth,
Who promis'd everlasting truth.
Celia, in honour of the day,
Unusual splendour would display:
Such was the charm her sweetness gave,
He thought her wedgwood had been *sève*,
Her taste diffused a gracious air,
And chaste Simplicity was there,
Whose secret power, though silent, great is,
The loveliest of the sweet Penates.
Florio, now present to the scene,
With spirits light, and gracious mien,
Sir Gilbert's port politely praises,
And carefully avoids French phrases;
Endures the daily dissertation
On land-tax, and a ruin'd nation;
Listens to many a tedious tale
Of poachers, who deserv'd a jail;
Heard all the business of the quorum,
Each cause and crime produc'd before 'em:
Heard them abuse with complaisance
The language, wines, and wits of France;
Nor did he hum a single air,
While good Sir Gilbert fill'd his chair.
Abroad, with joy and grateful pride,
He walks, with Celia by his side:
A thousand cheerful thoughts arise,
Each rural scene enchants his eyes;
With transports he begins to look
On Nature's all instructive book;
No objects now seem mean, or low,
Which point to Him from whom they flow
A berry or a bud excites
A chain of reasoning which delights,
Which spite of sceptic ebulitions,
Proves atheists not the best logicians.
A tree, a brook, a blade of grass,
Suggests reflections as they pass,
Till Florio, with a sigh, confest
The simplest pleasures are the best
Bellario's systems sink in air,
He feels the perfect, good, and fair.
As pious Celia rais'd the theme
To holy faith and love supreme;
Enlighten'd Florio learn'd to trace
In Nature's God the God of grace.
In wisdom as the convert grew
The hours on rapid pinions flew,
When call'd to dress, that Titus wore
A wig the alter'd Florio swore;
Or else, in estimating time,
He ne'er had mark'd it as a crime,
That he had lost but *one day's* blessing,
When we so many lose, by dressing.
The rest, suffice it now to say,
Was finish'd in the usual way.
Cupid, impatient for his hour,
Revil'd slow Themis' tedious power,
Whose parchment legends, singing, sealing,
Are cruel forms for Love to deal in.
At length to Florio's eager eyes,
Behold the day of bliss arise!
The golden sun illumes the globe,
The burning torch, the saffron robe.
Just as of old, glad Hymen wears,
And Cupid, as of old, appears
In Hymen's train; so strange the case
They hardly knew each other's face;
Yet both confess'd with glowing heart
They never were design'd to part;
Quoth Hymen, sure you're strangely slighted
At weddings not to be invited;
The reason's clear enough, quoth Cupid,
My company is thought but stupid,
Where Plutus is the favourite guest,
For he and I scarce speak at best.
The self-same sun which joins the twain
Sees Flavia sever'd from her swain;
Bellario sues for a divorce,
And both pursue their sep'rate course.
Oh wedded love! thy bliss how rare!
And yet the ill-assorted pair;
The pair who choose at Fashion's voice,
Or drag the chain of venal choice;

Have little cause to curse the state,
Who *make*, should never *blame* their fate,
Such flimsy ties, say where's the wonder,
If Doctors Commons snap asunder.
In either case, 'tis still the wife,
Gives cast and colour to the life.
Florio escap'd from Fashion's school
His heart and conduct learns to rule;
Conscience his useful life approves;
He serves his God, his country loves;
Reveres her laws, protects her rights,
And, for her interests, pleads or fights
Reviews with scorn his former life,
And, for his rescue, thanks his wife.

THE SLAVE TRADE:

A POEM.

———O great design!
Ye sons ef mercy! O complete your work;
Wrench from Oppression's hand the iron rod,
And bid the cruel feel the pains they give.
Thompson's " *Liberty.*"

If Heaven has into being deign'd to call
Thy light, O liberty! to shine on all;
Bright intellectual sun! why does thy ray
To earth distribute only partial day?
Since no resisting cause from spirit flows
Thy universal presence to oppose;
No obstacles by nature's hand imprest,
Thy subtle and ethereal beams arrest;
Not sway'd by Matter is thy course benign,
Or more direct or more oblique to shine;
Nor Motion's laws can speed thy active course,
Nor strong Repulsion's pow'rs obstruct thy force;
Since there is no convexity in mind,
Why are thy genial beams to parts confin'd?
While the chill north with thy bright ray is blest,
Why should fell darkness half the south invest?
Was it decreed, fair Freedom! at thy birth,
That thou should'd ne'er irradiate *all* the earth?
While Britain basks in thy full blaze of light,
Why lies sad *A*fric quench'd in total night?
Thee only, *sober* goddess! I attest,
In smiles chastis'd, and decent graces drest,
To thee alone pure daughter of the skies,
The hallow'd incense of the bard should rise?
Not that mad liberty, in whose wild praise
Too oft he trims his prostituted bays;
Not that unlicens'd monster of the crowd,
Whose roar terrific bursts in peals so loud,
Deaf'ning the ear of Peace; fierce Faction's tool,
Of rash Sedition born, and mad Misrule;
Whose stubborn mouth, rejecting Reason's reign,
No strength can govern, and no skill restrain;
Whose magic cries the frantic vulgar draw
To spurn at Order, and to outrage Law;
To tread on grave Authority and Pow'r,
And shake the work of ages in an hour:
Convuls'd her voice, and pestilent her breath,
She raves of mercy, while she deals out death;
Each blast is fate; she darts from either hand
Red conflagration o'er the astonish'd land;
Clamouring for peace, she rends the air with noise,
And to reform a part, the whole destroys.
Reviles oppression only to oppress,
And in the act of murder, breathes redress.
Such have we seen on Freedom's genuine coast,
Bellowing for blessings which were never lost.
'Tis past, and Reason rules the lucid hour,
And beauteous Order reassumes his power:
Lord of the bright ascendant may he reign,
Till perfect Peace eternal sway maintain!*
O, plaintive Southerne!† whose impassion'd page
Can melt the soul to grief, or rouse to rage!
Now, when congenial themes engage the Muse,
She burns to emulate thy generous views;
Her failing efforts mock her fond desires,
She shares thy feelings, not partakes thy fires.
Strange pow'r of song the strain that warms the heart
Seems the same inspiration to impart;
Touch'd by th' extrinsic energy alone,
We think the flame which melts us is our own:
Deceiv'd, for genius we mistake delight,
Charm'd as we read, we fancy we can write.
Though not to me, sweet bard, thy pow'rs belong,
The cause I plead shall sanctify my song.
The Muse awakes no artificial fire,
For Truth rejects what Fancy would inspire:
Here Art would weave her gayest flow'rs in vain,
The bright invention Nature would disdain.
For no fictitious ills these numbers flow,
But living anguish, and substantial wo;
No individual griefs my bosom melt,
For millions feel what Oronoko felt:
Fir'd by no single wrongs, the countless host
I mourn, by rapine dragg'd from Afric's coast.
Perish th' illiberal thought which would debase
The native genius of the sable race!
Perish the proud philosophy, which sought
To rob them of the pow'rs of equal thought!
Does then th' immortal principle within
Change with the casual colour of the skin?
Does Matter govern Spirit? or is mind
Degraded by the form to which 'tis join'd?
No: they have heads to think, and hearts to feel,
And souls to act, with firm, though erring zeal:
For they have keen affections, kind desires,
Love strong as death, and active patriot fires;

* Alluding to the riots of London in the year 1780.
† Author of the tragedy of Oronoko.

All the rude energy, the fervid flame,
Of high-soul'd passion, and ingenuous shame:
Strong, but luxuriant virtues boldly shoot
From the wild vigour of a savage root.

Nor weak their sense of honour's proud control,
For Pride is virtue in a Pagan soul;
A sense of worth, a conscience of desert,
A high, unbroken haughtiness of heart;
That self-same stuff which erst proud empires sway'd,
Of which the conquerors of the world were made.
Capricious fate of men! that very pride
In Afric scourg'd, in Rome was deify'd.

No muse, O Quashi!* shall thy deeds relate,
No statue snatch thee from oblivious fate!
For thou wast born where never gentle Muse
On valour's grave the flow'rs of Genius strews;
And thou wast born where no recording page
Plucks the fair deed from Time's devouring rage:
Had Fortune plac'd thee on some happier coast,
Where *polis'd* Pagans souls heroic boast,
To thee who sought'st a voluntary grave,
Th' injur'd honours of thy name to save,
Whose generous arm thy barbarous master spar'd,
Altars had smok'd, and temples had been rear'd.

Whene'er to Afric's shores I turn my eyes,
Horrors of deepest, deadliest guilt arise;
I see, by more than Fancy's mirror shown,
The burning village and the blazing town:
See the dire victim torn from social life,
The shrieking babe, the agonizing wife!
She, wretch forlorn! is dragg'd by hostile hands,
To distant tyrants sold, in distant lands!
Transmitted miseries, and successive chains,
The sole sad heritage her child obtains!
E'en this last wretched boon their foes deny,
To weep together, or together die.
By felon hands, by one relentless stroke,
See the fond links of feeling Nature broke!
The fibres twisting round a parent's heart,
Torn from their grasp, and bleeding as they part.
Hold! murderer's, hold! nor aggravate distress;
Respect the passions you yourselves possess,
Ev'n you of ruffian heart, and ruthless hand,
Love your own offspring, love your native land:
Ev'n you, with fond impatient feelings burn,
Though free as air, though certain of return,
Then, if to you who voluntarily roam,
So dear the memory of your distant home,
O think how absence the lov'd scene endears
To him whose food is groans, whose drink is tears;
Think on the wretch whose aggravated pains
To exile misery adds, to misery chains.
If warm *your* heart, to British feelings true,
As dear his land to him as yours to you;
And Liberty, in you a hallow'd flame,
Burns, unextinguish'd in his breast the same.
Then leave him holy Freedom's cheering smile
The heav'n-taught fondness for the parent soil;
Revere affections mingled with our frame,
In every nature, every clime the same;
In all, these feelings equal sway maintain:
In all the love of Home and Freedom reign;
And Tempe's vale, and parch'd Angola's sand,
One equal fondness of their son's command.
Th' unconquer'd savage laughs at pain and toil,
Basking in Freedom's beams which gild his native soil.

Does thirst of empire, does desire of fame,
(For these are specious crimes) our rage inflame?
No: sordid lust of gold their fate controls,
The basest appetite of basest souls;
Gold, better gain'd by what their ripening sky,
Their fertile fields, their arts,* and mines supply.

What wrongs, what injuries does Oppression plead,
To smooth the crime and sanctify the deed?
What strange offence, what aggravated sin?
They stand convicted—of a darker skin!
Barbarians, hold! th' opprobrious commerce spare,
Respect HIS sacred image which they bear.
Though dark and savage, ignorant and blind,
They claim the common privilege of kind;
Let malice strip them of each other plea,
They still are men, and men should still be free.
Insulted Reason loaths the inverted trade—
Loathes, as she views the human purchase made;
The outrag'd goddess, with abhorrent eyes,
Sees MAN the traffic, SOULS the merchandise!
Man, whom fair Commerce taught with judging eye,
And liberal hand, to barter or to buy,
Indignant Nature blushes to behold,
Degraded man himself, truck'd, barter'd, sold:
Of ev'ry native privilege bereft,
Yet curs'd with ev'ry wounded feeling left.
Hard lot! each brutal suff'ring to sustain,
Yet keep the sense acute of human pain.
Plead not, in reason's palpable abuse,
Their sense of feeling† callous and obtuse:
From heads to hearts lies Nature's plain appeal,
Though few can reason, all mankind can feel.
Though wit may boast a livelier dread of shame,
A loftier sense of long refinement claim;
Though polish'd manners may fresh wants invent,
And nice distinctions nicer souls torment;
Though these on finer spirits heavier fall,
Yet natural evils are the same to all.
Tho' wounds there are which reason's force may heal,
There needs no logic sure to make us feel.
The nerve, howe'er untutor'd, can sustain
A sharp unutterable sense of pain;

* It is a point of honour among negroes of a high spirit to die rather than to suffer their glossy skin to bear the mark of the whip. Quashi had somehow offended his master, a young planter with whom he had been bred up in the endearing intimacy of a play-fellow. His services had been faithful; his attachment affectionate. The master resolved to punish him, and pursued him for that purpose. In trying to escape Quashi stumbled and fell; the master fell upon him. they wrestled long with doubtful victory; at length Quashi got uppermost, and being firmly seated on his master's breast, he secured his legs with one hand, and with the other drew a sharp knife, then said, 'master, I have been bred up with you from a child; I loved you as myself; in return, you have condemned me to a punishment of which I must ever have borne the marks—thus only can I avoid them;' so saying, he drew the knife with all his strength across his own throat, and fell down dead, without a groan, on his master's body.—*Ramsay's Essay on the Treatment of African Slaves.*

* Besides many valuable productions of the soil, cloths and carpets of exquisite manufacture are brought from the coast of Guinea.

† Nothing is more frequent than this cruel and stupid argument, that they do not feel the miseries inflicted on them as Europeans would do.

As exquisitely fashion'd in a slave,
As where unequal fate a sceptre gave.
Sense is as keen where Gambia's waters glide,
As where proud Tiber rolls his classic tide.
Though verse or rhetoric point the feeling line,
They do not whet sensation, but define.
Did ever wretch less feel the galling chain,
When Zeno prov'd there was no ill in pain?
In vain the sage to smooth its horror tries;
Spartans and Helots see with different eyes;
Their miseries philosophic quirks deride,
Slaves groan in pangs disown'd by stoic pride.

When the fierce sun darts vertical his beams,
And thirst and hunger mix their wild extremes;
When the sharp iron* wounds his inmost soul,
And his strain'd eyes in burning anguish roll;
Will the parch'd negro own, ere he expire,
No pain in hunger, and no heat in fire?

For him, when agony his frame destroys,
What hope of present fame or future joys?
For *that* have heroes shorten'd nature's date,
For *this* have martyrs gladly met their fate;
But him forlorn, no heroes pride sustains,
No martyr's blissful vision soothe his pains;
Sullen, he mingles with his kindred dust,
For he has learn'd to dread the Christian's trust;
To him what mercy can that GOD display,
Whose servants murder, and whose sons betray?
Savage! thy venial error I deplore,
They are *not* Christians who infest thy shore.

O thou sad spirit, whose preposterous yoke
The great deliverer Death, at length has broke,
Releas'd from misery, and escap'd from care,
Go, meet that mercy man deny'd thee here.
In thy dark home, sure refuge of th' oppress'd,
The wicked vex not, and the weary rest.
And, if some notions, vague and undefin'd,
Of future terrors have assail'd thy mind;
If such thy masters have presum'd to teach,
As terrors only they are prone to preach;
(For should they paint eternal Mercy's reign,
Where were the oppressor's rod, the captive's chain?)
If, then, thy troubled soul has learn'd to dread
The dark unknown thy trembling footsteps tread;
On HIM, who made thee what thou art, depend;
HE, who withholds the means, accepts the end.
Thy metal night thy Saviour will not blame;
He died for those who never heard his name.
Not *thine* the reckoning dire of LIGHT abus'd,
KNOWLEDGE disgrac'd, and LIBERTY misus'd;
On *thee* no awful judge incens'd shall sit
For parts perverted, and dishonour'd wit.
Where ignorance may be found the safest plea,
How many learn'd and wise shall envy *thee!*
And thou, WHITE SAVAGE! whether lust of gold
Or lust of conquest rule thee uncontroll'd!
Hero, or robber!—by whatever name!—
Thou plead thy impious claim to wealth or fame;
Whether inferior mischief be thy boast,
A tyrant trader rifling *Congo's* coast;
Or bolder carnage track thy crimson way,
Kings dispossess'd, and provinces thy prey;
Whether thou pant to tame earth's distant bound;
All Cortez murder'd, all Columbus found;
O'er plunder'd realms to reign, detested lord,
Make millions wretched, and thyself abhorr'd:—
Whether Cartouche in forests break the law.
Or bolder Cæsar keep the world in awe;
In Reason's eye, in Wisdom's fair account,
Your sum of glory boasts a like amount;
The means may differ, but the end's the same,
Conquest is pillage with a nobler name,
Who makes the sum of human blessings less,
Or sinks the stock of general happiness,
Tho' erring fame may grace, tho' false renown
His life may blazon or his memory crown;
Yet the last audit shall reverse the cause;
And God shall vindicate his broken laws.

Had those advent'rous spirits who explore
Thro' ocean's trackless wastes, the far-sought shore;
Whether of wealth insatiate, or of pow'r,
Conquerors who waste, or ruffian's who devour:
Had these possess'd, O COOK! thy gentle mind,
Thy love of arts, thy love of human kind;
Had these pursued thy mild and liberal plan,
DISCOVERIES had not been a curse to man!
Then, bless'd Philanthropy! thy social hands,
Had link'd dissever'd worlds in brothers' bands;
Careless, if colour, or if clime divide;
Then lov'd and loving, man had liv'd and died.
Then with pernicious skill we had not known
To bring their vices back and leave our own.

The purest wreaths which hang on Glory's shrine,
For empires founded, peaceful Penn! are thine;
No blood-stain'd laurels crown'd thy virtuous toil,
No slaughter'd natives drench'd thy fair-earn'd soil,
Still thy meek spirit in thy flock* survives,
Consistent still, *their* doctrines rule their lives;
Thy followers only have effac'd the shame,
Inscrib'd by SLAVERY on the Christian name.

Shall Britain, where the soul of freedom reigns,
Forge chains for others she herself disdains?
Forbid it, Heaven! O let the nations know
The liberty she loves, she will bestow;
Not to herself the glorious gift confin'd,
She spreads the blessing wide as human kind;
And, scorning narrow views of time and place,
Bids all be free in earth's extended space.

What page of human annals can record
A deed so bright as human rights restor'd?
O may that god-like deed, that shining page,
Redeem OUR fame, and consecrate OUR age!
And let this glory mark our favour'd shore,
To curb False Freedom and the True restore.

And see the cherub Mercy from above,
Descending softly, quits the sphere of love!
On Britain's isle she sheds her heavenly dew;
And breathes her spirit o'er th' enlighten'd few.
From soul to soul the spreading influence steals,
Till every breast the soft contagion feels.
She speeds, exulting, to the burning shore,
With the best message angel ever bore;
Hark! 'tis the note which spoke a Saviour's birth!
Glory to God on high, and peace on earth!
She vindicates the pow'r in Heaven ador'd,

* This is not said figuratively. The writer of these lines has seen a complete set of chains, fitted to every separate limb of these unhappy, innocent men; together with instruments for wrenching open the jaws, contrived with such ingenious cruelty as would gratify the tender mercies of an inquisitor.

* The Quakers have emancipated all their slaves throughout America.

She stills the clank of chains, and sheathes the sword;
She cheers the mourner, and with soothing hands
From bursting hearts unbinds th' oppressor's bands;
Restores the lustre of the Christian name,
And clears the foulest blot that dimm'd its fame.
As the mild spirit hovers o'er the coast,
A fresher hue their wither'd landscapes boast;
Her healing smiles the ruin'd scenes repair,
And blasted Nature wears a joyous air;
While she proclaims thro' all their spicy groves,
'Henceforth your fruits, your labours, and your loves,
'All that your sires possess'd, or you have sown,
'Sacred from plunder—all is now YOUR OWN.'
And now, her high commission from above,
Stamp'd with the holy characters of love,
The meek-ey'd spirit waving in her hand,
Breathes manumission o'er the rescu'd land;
She tears the banner stain'd with blood and tears,
And LIBERTY! thy shining standard rears!
As the bright ensign's glory she displays,
See pale OPPRESSION faints beneath the blaze!
The giant dies! no more his frown appals,
The chain, untouch'd drops off; the fetter falls.
Astonish'd Echo tells the vocal shore,
Oppression's fall'n, and Slavery is no more!
The dusky myriads crowd the sultry plain,
All hail that MERCY, long invok'd in vain.
Victorious Pow r! she bursts their two-fold bands,
And Faith and Freedom spring from Britain's hands.
And Thou! great source of Nature and of Grace,
Who of one blood didst form the human race
Look down in mercy in thy chosen time,
With equal eye on Afric's suff'ring clime:
Disperse her shades of intellectual night,
Repeat thy high behest—Let there be Light
Bring each benighted soul, great God, to Thee,
And with thy wide salvation make them free!

DAN AND JANE:

OR FAITH AND WORKS.—A TALE.

GOOD, Dan and Jane were man and wife,
And liv'd a loving kind of life;
One point, however, they disputed,
And each by turns his mate confuted.
'Twas Faith and Works—this knotty question
They found not easy of digestion.
While Dan alone for faith contended,
Jane equally good works defended.
'They are not Christians sure, but Turks
Who build on faith and scoff at works,'
Quoth Jane—while eager Dan reply'd,
'By none but heathens faith's deny'd.'
'I'll tell you wife,' at length quoth Dan,
'A story of a right good man.
A patriarch sage, of ancient days,
A man of faith, whom all must praise
In his own country he possess'd,
Whate'er can make a wise man blest;
His was the flock, the field, the spring,
In short, a little rural king.
Yet, pleas'd, he quits his native land,
By faith in the divine command.
God bade him go; and he, content,
Went forth, not knowing where he went.
He trusted in the promise made,
And, undisputing strait obey'd.
The heavenly word he did not doubt,
But prov'd his faith by going out.
Jane answer'd, with some little pride—
'I've an example on my side;
And tho' my tale be somewhat longer,
I trust you'll find it vastly stronger.
I'll tell you, Daniel, of a man,
The holiest since the world began:
Who now God's favour is receiving
For prompt *obeying*, not *believing*.
One only son this man possest,
In whom his righteous age was blest;
And more to mark the grace of heaven,
This son by miracle was given.
And from this child the word divine
Had promis'd an illustrious line.
When lo! at once a voice he hears,
Which sounds like thunder in his ears.
God says—Go sacrifice thy son!
—This moment, Lord, it shall be done.
He goes, and instantly prepares,
To slay the child of many prayers.
Now here you see the grand expedience,
Of *works*, of actual sound *obedience*.
This was not *faith*, but *act* and deed,
The Lord commands—the child shalt bleed.'
Thus Abraham *acted*,' Jenny cried;
'Thus Abraham *trusted*,' Dan replied
'Abraham,' quoth Jane, 'why that's my man.'
'No, Abraham's him I mean,' says Dan.
'He stands a monument of *faith*;'—
'No, 'tis for *works* the Scripture saith.
''Tis for his faith that I defend him;'
''Tis for obedience I commend him.'
Thus he—thus she—both warmly feel,
And lose their temper in their zeal;
Too quick each other's choice to blame,
They did not see each meant the same.
'At length, good wife,' said honest Dan,
'We're talking of the self-same man,
The works you praise I own indeed,
Grow from that faith for which I plead;
And Abraham, whom for faith I quote,
For works deserves especial note:
'Tis not enough of faith to *talk*,
A man of God with God must walk
Our doctrines are at last the same,
They only differ in the name:
The faith I fight for, is the root;
The works you value are the fruit
How shall you know my creed 's sincere,
Unless in works my faith appear?
How shall I know a tree's alive,
Unless I see it bear and thrive?
Your works not growing on my root,
Would prove they were not genuine fruit

If faith produce no works, I see,
That faith is not a living tree.
Thus faith and works together grow,
No separate life they e'er can know:
They're soul and body, hand and heart,
What God hath join'd let no man part.'

AN HEROIC EPISTLE.

TO MISS SALLY HORNE,—AGED THREE YEARS,

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF DR. HORNE, LATE BISHOP OF NORWICH.

Written on the blank leaves of "Mother Bunch's Tales;" and showing their superiority of these histories to most others.

To thee, fair creature, SALLY HORNE,
And sure a fairer ne'er was born;
A grave biographer I send,
By NEWBERRY in the church-yard penn'd;
(Or if to truth my phrase I stinted,
By NEWBERRY in the church-yard printed;)
Might Mother Bunch—a worthier sage,
Ne'er fill'd, I ween th' historic page;
For she, of kings and queens can prate,
As fast as patriotic KATE;*
Nor vents like her, her idle spleen,
Merely because *'tis* king or queen.
KATE, who each subject makes a slave,
Would make each potentate a knave;
Though Britons can the converse prove,
A king who reigns and rules by love.
While Mother Bunch's honest story,
Unaw'd by WHIG, unwarp'd by TORY;
Paints sovereigns with impartial pen,
Some good, some bad, like other men.
Oh, there are few such books as these,
Which only mean to teach or please;
Read Mother Bunch, then charming SALLY,
Her writings, with your taste will tally.
No pride of learning she displays,
Nor reads one word an hundred ways;
To please the young she lays before 'em
A simple tale, *sans variorum;*
With notes and margins unperplext,
And comments which confuse the text.
No double senses interfere
To puzzle what before was clear.
Here no mistaken dates deceive ye,
Which oft occur from HUME to LIVY.
Her dates, more safe and more sublime,
Seize the broad phrase—'*Once on a time.*'
Then Mother Bunch is no misleader
In citing authors who precede her;
Unlike our modern wits of note,
Who purposely and oft misquote;
Who injure history, or intend it,
As much as KENNICOT to mend it;
And seek no less the truth to mangle,
Than he to clear and disentangle.
These short digressions we apply
Our author's fame to magnify:
She seeks not to bewilder youth,
But all is true she gives for truth:
And still, to analyze you're able,
Fable is safe while given as fable;
As mere invention you receive it,
You know 'tis false, and disbelieve it;
While that bad chemistry which brings
And mixes up incongruous things,
With genuine fact invention blending
As if true history wanted mending;
Or flav'ring, to mislead our youth,
Mere fable with a dash of truth;
In all these heterogeneous tales
The injudicious project fails;
Of *truth* you do not get your measure,
And of pure *fiction* lose the pleasure.
But Mother Bunch rejects such arts,
A sounder taste her work imparts.
Then if for prosperous turns you look,
There's no such other history book.
Old authors show, nor do I wrong 'em,
How tyrants shar'd the world among 'em
And all we learn of ancient times,
Are human woes and human crimes.
They tell us naught but dismal tales,
How virtue sinks, and vice prevails;
And all their labours but declare
The miseries of the good and fair;
How one brave captive in a quarrel
Was tumbled down hill in a barrel!
In fiery flames how some did fry,
Only because they dar'd not lie!
How female victims meet their doom,
At Aulis one, and more at Rome!
How ease the hero's laurels stain'd
How CAPUA lost what CANNÆ gain'd!
How *he*, whom long success attends,
Is kill'd at home among his friends!
How ATHENS, him who serv'd so well,
Rewarded with an oyster-shell!
How NERO stabb'd a mother's breast
Ah, barbarous CLIO, spare the rest;
Conceal these horrors, if thou'rt able,
If these be truth, oh give me fable!
Till real deed are fit to mention,
Regale my feelings with invention.
But Mother Bunch's morals tell
How blest all were who acted well!
How the good little girl 's regarded,
And boy who learns his book rewarded.
How loss of favour follows rudeness,
While sugar-plumbs repay all goodness;
How she who learns to read or write,
Will get a coach or chariot by't;
And not a faggot-maker's daughter
But has it at her christening taught her,
By some invited fairy guest,
That she shall wed a prince at least;
And thro' the whole this truth's pursu'd
That to be happy 's to be good.
If these to life be contradictions,
Mark the morality of fictions;
Axioms more popular they teach,

* See Mrs. *Macaulay's* History of England.

That to be good is to be rich!
For all the misses marry kings,
And diamonds are but common things;
While dames in history hardly get 'em,
Our heroines ope their mouths and spit 'em.
Oh, this is profitable learning,
Past cold historians' dull discerning,
Who, while their annals they impart,
Expose, but seldom mend the heart.
I grant, they teach to know mankind,
To learn we're wretched, weak, and blind:
But till the heart from vice is clear,
Who wants to know what passes there?
Till Hercules to cleanse was able,
No doubt they *shut* th' Augean stable.
Here too in high emphatic tone
The power of female worth is shown;
Ev'n enterprising Joan of Arc
Falls short of true heroic mark:
THALESTRIS was a mere home-keeper,
And swift CAMILLA but a creeper.
Here deeds of valour are as common
As song or dance to real woman;
And meekest damsels find it facile
To storm a giant's moated castle;
Where drawbridges do open fly
If virgin foot approaches nigh;
And brazen-gates with twenty locks,
At which an army vainly knocks,
Fly ope, nor on their hinges linger,
At touch of virgin's little finger.
Then slow attacks, and tiresome sieges,
Which history makes the work of ages,
Are here, by means of fairy power,
Achiev'd with ease in half an hour.
Tactics! *they* prove, there 's nothing in it,
Who conquer kingdoms in a minute:
They never hear of ten years jars,
(For TROY's the average length of wars.)
And diplomatic form and rule
Might learn from Mother Bunch's school,
How rapidly are state intrigues
Convey'd with boots of seven long leagues.
Here farther too, our great commanders,
Who conquer'd France, and rescued Flanders,
From Mother Bunch's Tales might he
Some secrets worth a general's ear;
How armies need not stop to bait,
And heroes never drink or eat;
Wrapt in sublimer occupation
They scorn such vulgar renovation.
Your British generals cannot keep
Themselves and fellows half so cheap;
For men and horses, out of books,
Call, one for corn, and one for cooks;
And dull historic nags must stay
For provender of oats and hay;
While *these* bold heroes wing their flight
Through twenty kingdoms in a night;
Of silvery dews they snatch a cup,
Or on a slice of moonshine sup;
And while they fly to meet their queen,
With half the convex world between,
Their milk-white palfreys, scorning grass,
Just crop a rose-leaf as they pass.
Then Mother Bunch's morals strike,
By praising friend and foe alike.
What virtue to the world is lost,
Because on thy ill-fated coast,
O Carthage! sung alone by foes,
The sun of history never rose!
Fertile in heroes, didst thou own
The muse that makes those heroes known;
Then had the bright reverse appear'd
And Carthaginian truth been clear'd:
On Punic faith, so long revil'd,
The wily African had smil'd;
And, possibly, not much had err'd,
If we of *Roman* fraud had heard.
Then leave your Robertson's and Bryants,
For John, the murderer of giants;
Since all mythology profane
Is quite as doubtful, quite as vain.
Though Bryant, learned friend of youth
His fable consecrates to truth:
And Robertson with just applause
His finish'd portraits fairly draws.
Yet history, great Raleigh knew,
And knowing, griev'd, may not be true:
For how the facts are we to know
Which pass'd a thousand years ago
When he no just account could get
Of quarrel in the adjacent street;
Though from his chair the noise he heard,
The tale of each relater err'd.
But if the fact 's recorded right,
The motive seldom comes in sight;
Hence, while the fairest deed we blame,
We often crown the worst with fame.
Then read, if genuine truth you'd glean,
Those who were actors in the scene;
Hear, with delight, the modest Greek,
Of his renown'd *ten thousand* speak.
His commentaries* read again
Who led the troops and held the pen,
The way to conquest best he show'd,
Who trod ere he prescrib'd the road.
Read *him*, for lofty periods fam'd,
Who Charles's age adorn'd and sham'd;
Read Clarendon; unaw'd, unbrib'd,
Who rul'd th' events his pen describ'd;
Who law and courts, and senates knew,
And saw the sources whence he drew.
Yet, lovely SALLY, be not frighten'd,
Nor dread to have thy mind enlighten'd;
Admire with me the fair alliance
Which mirth, at Maudlin,† makes with science:
How humour may with learning dwell,
Go ask papa—for he can tell.

MARGERY TWO-SHOES.

* Cesar.

† Dr. *Horne* was at this time president of Magdalen College, Oxford, where this little poem was written.

SENSIBILITY:

AN EPISTLE TO THE HONOURABLE MRS. BOSCAWEN.

ACCEPT, BOSCAWEN! these unpolished lays,
Nor blame too much the verse you cannot praise.
For you, far other bards have wak'd the string,
Far other bards for you were wont to sing;

Yet on the gale their parting music steals,
Yet your charm'd ear the lov'd impression feels:
You heard the lyres of Littleton and Young,
And this a grace, and that a seraph strung.
These are no more! but not with these decline
The attic chasteness or the vig'rous line.
Still *sad Elfrida's poet** shall complain,
Still, either Warton breathe his classic strain:
While for the wonders of the Gothic page,
Otranto's fame shall vindicate the age,
Nor tremble lest the tuneful art expire,
While Beattie strikes anew old Spencer's lyre;
He best to paint the genuine minstrel knew,
Who from himself, the living portrait drew.
Though Latian bards had gloried in his name,
When in full brightness burnt the Latian flame;
Yet fir'd with loftier hopes than transient bays,
See Lowth† despise the meed of mortal praise;
Spurn the cheap wreath by human science won,
Borne on the wing sublime of Amos' son!
He seiz'd the mantle as the prophet flew,
And with his mantle caught his spirit too.
To snatch bright beauty from devouring fate,
And lengthen nature's transitory date;
At once the critic's and the painter's art,
With Fresnoy's skill and Guido's grace impart:
To form with code correct the graphic school,
And lawless fancy curb by sober rule;
To show how genius fires, how taste restrains,
While, what both are, his pencil best explains;
Have we not REYNOLDS?‡ lives not JENYNS yet,
To prove his lowest title was a wit?§
Though purer flames thy hallow'd zeal inspire
Than e'er were kindled at the Muse's fire,
Thee, mitred Chester!‖ all the Nine shall boast;
And is not Johnson ours? himself a host!
Yes, still for you your gentle stars dispense:
The charm of friendship and the feast of sense:
Yours is the bliss, and Heav'n no dearer sends,
To call the wisest, brightest, best, your friends.
And while to these I raise the votive line,
O! let me grateful own these friends are mine;
With Carter trace the wit to Athens known,
Or view in Montague that wit our own:
Or mark, well pleas'd, Chapone's instructive page,
Intent to raise the morals of the age:
Or boast, in Walsingham, the various power,
To cheer the lonely, grace the letter'd hour;
Delany too is ours, serenely bright,
Wisdom's strong ray, and virtue's milder light:
And she who bless'd the friend, and grac'd the lays
Of poignant Swift, still gilds our social days;
Long, long protract thy light, O star benign!
Whose setting beams with milder lustre shine.
Nor, Barbauld, shall my glowing heart refuse

* Milton calls Euripides sad *Electra's poet.*
† Then bishop of London.
‡ See Sir *Joshua Reynold's* very able notes to *Du Fresnoy's* poem on the art of painting, translated by Mr. Mason.—Also, his series of *Discourses to the academy*, which, though written professedly on the subject of painting, contain the principles of general art, and are delivered with so much perspicuous good sense, as to be admirably calculated to assist in forming the taste of the general reader.
§ Mr. *Soame Jenyns* had just published his work *On the internal Evidence of the Christian Religion.*
‖ Now bishop of London—See his admirable poem on death.

Its tribute to thy virtues, or thy muse;
This humble merit shall at least be mine,
The poet's chaplet for thy brow to twine;
My verse thy talents to the world shall teach,
And praise the genius it despairs to reach.
Yet what is wit, and what the poet's art?
Can genius shield the vulnerable heart?
Ah no! where bright imagination reigns,
The fine wrought spirit feels acuter pains;
Where glow exalted sense and taste refin'd,
There keener anguish rankles in the mind;
There, feeling is diffus'd through ev'ry part,
Thrills in each nerve, and lives in all the heart;
And those whose gen'rous souls each tear would keep
From other's eyes, are born themselves to weep.
Can all the boasted pow'rs of wit and song,
Of life one pang remove, one hour prolong?
Fallacious hope! which daily truths deride;
For you, alas! have wept, and Garrick dy'd!
O shades of Hampton! witness, as I mourn,
Could wit or song elude your fav'rite's urn?
Though living virtue still your haunt endears,
Yet buried worth shall justify my tears.
Who now with spirit keen, yet judgment cool,
The errors of my orphan muse shall rule?
With keen acumen how his piercing eye,
The fault conceal'd from vulgar view would spy!
While with a generous warmth he strove to hide,
Nay vindicate the fault his taste had spy'd.
So pleas'd could he detect a happy line
That he would fancy merit ev'n in mine.
His wit so pointed it ne'er miss'd its end,
And so well temper'd it ne'er lost a friend;
How his keen eye, quick mind, and ardent heart,
Impov'rish'd nature, and exhausted art,
A *muse of fire* has sung,* if muse could trace,
Or verse retrieve the evanescent grace!
How rival bards with rival statesmen strove,
Who most should gain his praise or win his love!
Opposing parties to one point he drew,
Thus Tully's Atticus was Cæsar's too.
Tho' time his mellowing hand across has stole,
Soft'ning the tints of sorrow on the soul;
The deep impression long my heart shall fill,
And ev'ry fainter trace be perfect still.
Forgive, my friend, if wounded memory melt,
You best can pardon who have deepest felt,
You, who for Britain's hero† and your own,
The deadliest pang which rend the soul have known;
You, who have found how much the feeling heart
Shapes its own wound, and points itself the dart;
You, who are call'd the varied loss to mourn;
You, who have clasp'd a son's untimely urn;
You, who from frequent fond experience feel
The wounds such minds receive can never heal;
That grief a thousand entrances can find,
Where parts superior dignify the mind;
Yet would you change that sense acute to gain
A dear bought absence from the poignant pain;
Commuting ev'ry grief whose feelings give
In loveless, joyless apathy to live?

* See Mr. *Sheridan's* beautiful monody.
† Admiral *Boscawen.*

For though in souls where energies abound,
Pain through its numerous avenues can wound;
Yet the same avenues are open still,
To casual blessings as to casual ill.
Nor is the trembling temper more awake
To every wound calamity can make,
Than is the finely fashion'd nerve alive
To ev'ry transport pleasure has to give.
Let not the vulgar read this pensive strain,
Their jests the tender anguish would profane.
Yet these some deem the happiest of their kind,
Whose low enjoyments never reach the mind;
Who ne'er a pain but for themselves have known,
Who ne'er have felt a sorrow but their own:
Who deem romantic ev'ry finer thought
Conceiv'd by pity, or by friendship wrought;
Whose insulated souls ne'er feel the pow'r
Of gen'rous sympathy's extatic hour;
Whose disconnected hearts ne'er taste the bliss
Extracted from another's happiness;
Who ne'er the high heroic duty know,
For public good the private to forego.
Then wherefore happy? where's the kindred mind?
Where the large soul which takes in human kind?
Yes—'tis the untold sorrow to explain,
To mitigate the unsuspected pain;
The rule of holy sympathy to keep,
Joy for the Joyful, tears for them that weep:
To these the virtuous half their pleasures owe,
Pleasures, the selfish are not born to know;
They never know in all their coarser bliss,
The sacred rapture of a pain like this.
Then take ye happy vulgar take your part
Of sordid joy which never touch'd the heart.
Benevolence, which seldom stays to choose,
Lest pausing Prudence tempt her to refuse;
Friendship, which once determin'd, never swerves,
Weighs ere it trusts, but weighs not ere it serves.
And soft-ey'd Pity, and Forgiveness bland,
And melting *Charity with open hand;*
And artless love, believing and believ'd,
And honest Confidence which ne'er deceiv'd;
And mercy, stretching out ere Want can speak,
To wipe the tear which stains Affliction's cheek;
These ye have never known—then take your part
Of sordid joy which never touch'd the heart.
You who have melted in bright glory's flame,
Or felt the grateful breath of well-earn'd fame;
Or you, the chosen agents from above,
Whose bounty vindicates Almighty love;
You, who subdue the vain desire of show,
Not to accumulate but to bestow;
You who the dreary haunts of sorrow seek,
Raise the sunk heart, and flush the fading cheek;
You, who divide the joys and share the pains,
When merit triumphs, or oppress'd complains;
You, who with pensive Petrarch, love to mourn,
Or weave the garland for Tibullus' urn;
You, whose touch'd hearts with real sorrows swell,
Or feel, when genius paints those sorrows well,
Would you renounce such energies as these
For vulgar pleasures or for selfish ease?
Would you to 'scape the pain, the joy forego,
And miss the transport to avoid the wo?
Would you the sense of actual pity lose,
Or cease to share the mournings of the muse?
No, Greville,* no!—thy song, tho' steep'd in tears,
Though all thy soul in all thy strain appears;
Yet would'st thou all thy well sung anguish choose,
And all th' inglorious peace thou begg'st refuse:
And while discretion all our views should guide,
Beware, lest secret aims and ends she hide;
Though 'midst the crowd of virtues, 'tis her part,
Like a firm sentinel—to guard the heart;
Beware, lest Prudence 'self become unjust,
Who never was deceiv'd, I would not trust;
Prudence must never be suspicion's slave,
The World's wise man is more than half a knave.
And you, Boscawen, while you fondly melt,
In raptures none but mothers ever felt;
And as you view, prophetic, in your race,
All Levison's sweetness, and all Beaufort's grace;
Yet dread what dangers each lov'd child may share,
The youth, if valiant, or the maid, if fair;
You who have felt, so frail is mortal joy!
That, while we clasp the phantom, we destroy;
That perils multiply as blessings flow,
That sorrows grafted on enjoyments grow;
That clouds impending dim our brightest views,
That who have most to love have most to lose;
Yet from these fair possessions would you part,
To shelter from contingent ills your heart?
Would you forego the objects of your prayer
To save the dangers of a distant care?
Renounce the brightness op'ning to your view
For all the safety dulness ever knew?
Would you consent, to shun the fears you prove
That they should merit less, or you less love.
Yet while we claim the sympathy divine,
Which makes, O man, the woes of others thine;
While her fair triumphs swell the modish page,
She drives the sterner virtues from the stage:
While Feeling boasts her ever tearful eye,
Fair Truth, firm Faith, and manly Justice fly:
Justice, prime good! from whose prolific law,
All worth, all virtue, their strong essence draw;
Justice, a grace quite obsolete we hold,
The feign'd Astrea of an age of gold:
The sterling attribute we scarcely own,
While spurious Candour fills the vacant throne.
Sweet Sensibility! Thou secret pow'r
Who shed'st thy gifts upon the natal hour,
Like fairy favours; Art can never seize,
Nor Affectation catch thy power to please;
Thy subtle essence still eludes the chains
Of Definition, and defeats her pains.
Sweet Sensibility! thou keen delight!
Unprompted moral! sudden sense of right!
Perception exquisite! fair Virtue's seed!
Thou quick precursor of the lib'ral deed!
Thou hasty conscience! reason's blushing morn!
Instinctive kindness e'er reflection 's born!
Prompt sense of equity! to thee belongs
The swift redress of unexamin'd wrongs!

* See her beautiful Ode to Indifference.

Eager to serve, the cause perhaps untried,
But always apt to chuse the suff'ring side!
To those who know thee not, no word can paint,
And those who know thee, know all words are faint!
She does not feel thy pow'r who boasts thy flame,
And rounds her every period with thy name;
Nor she who vents her disproportion'd sighs
With pining *Lesbia* when her sparrow dies:
Nor she who melts when hapless *Shore* expires,
While real mis'ry unreliev'd retires!
Who thinks feign'd sorrow all her tears deserve,
And weeps o'er Werter while her children starve,
As words are but th' external marks to tell
The fair ideas in the mind that dwell;
And only are of things the outward sign,
And not the things themselves they but define;
So exclamations, tender tones, fond tears,
And all the graceful drapery Feeling wears;
These are her garb, not her, they but express
Her form, her semblance, her appropriate dress;
And these fair marks, reluctant I relate,
These lovely symbols may be counterfeit.
There are, who fill with brilliant plaints the page,
If a poor linnet meet the gunner's rage;
There are, who for a dying fawn deplore,
As if friend, parent, country, were no more;
Who boast quick rapture trembling in their eye,
If from the spider's snare they snatch a fly;
There are, whose well sung plaints each breast inflame,
And break all hearts—but his from whom they came!
He, scorning life's low duties to attend,
Writes odes on friendship, while he cheats his friend.
Of jails and punishments he grieves to hear,
And pensions 'prison'd virtue with a tear;
While unpaid bills his creditor presents,
And ruin'd innocence his crime laments.
Not so the tender moralist of Tweed,
His gen'rous *man of feeling* feels indeed.
O Love divine! sole source of charity!
More dear one genuine deed perform'd for thee,
Than all the periods Feeling e'er could turn,
Than all thy touching page, perverted Sterne!
Not that by deeds alone this love 's express'd,
If so the affluent only were the bless'd;
One silent wish, one prayer, one soothing word,
The page of mercy shall, well-pleas'd record;
One soul-felt sigh by pow'rless pity given,
Accepted incense! shall ascend to heav'n!
Since trifles make the sum of human things,
And half our misery from our foibles springs,
Since life's best joys consist in peace and ease,
And though but few can serve, yet all may please;
O let th' ungentle spirit learn from hence,
A small unkindness is a great offence.
To spread large bounties, though we wish in vain,
Yet all may shun the guilt of giving pain:
To bless mankind with tides of flowing wealth,
With rank to grace them, or to crown with health,
Our little lot denies; yet lib'ral still,
Heav'n gives its counterpoise to every ill,
Nor let us murmur at our stinted pow'rs,
When kindness, love, and concord, may be ours.
The gift of minist'ring to other's ease,
To all her sons impartial she decrees;
The gentle offices of patient love,
Beyond all flattery, and all price above;
The mild forbearance at a brother's fault,
The angry word suppress'd the taunting thought;
Subduing and subdu'd, the petty strife,
Which clouds the colour of domestic life;
The sober comfort, all the peace which springs,
From the large aggregate of little things;
On these small cares of daughter, wife, or friend,
The almost sacred joys of *home* depend:
There Sensibility, thou best may'st reign,
Home is thy true legitimate domain.
A solitary bliss thou ne'er could'st find,
Thy joys with those thou lov'st are intertwin'd;
And he whose helpless tenderness removes
The rankling thorn which wounds the breast he loves,
Smooths not another's rugged path alone,
But clears th' obstruction which impedes his own.
The hint malevolent, the look oblique,
The obvious satire, or implied dislike;
The sneer equivocal, the harsh reply,
And all the cruel language of the eye;
The artful injury, whose venom'd dart,
Scarce wounds the hearing, while it stabs the heart;
The guarded phrase, whose meaning kills, yet told
The list'ner wonders, how you thought it cold;
Small slights, neglect, unmix'd perhaps with hate,
Make up in number what they want in weight.
These and a thousand griefs minute as these,
Corrode our comfort and destroy our ease.
As Feeling tends to good or leans to ill,
It gives fresh force to vice or principle;
'Tis not a gift peculiar to the good,
'Tis often but the virtue of the blood:
And what would seem compassion's moral flow,
Is but a circulation swift or slow:
But to divert it to its proper course,
There wisdom's pow'r appears, there reason's force:
If ill-directed it pursue the wrong,
It adds new strength to what before was strong;
Breaks out in wild irregular desires,
Disorder'd passions, and illicit fires;
Without, deforms the man, depraves within,
And makes the work of God the slave of sin.
But if Religion's bias rule the soul,
Then Sensibility exalts the whole;
Sheds its sweet sunshine on the moral part,
Nor wastes on fancy what should warm the heart.
Cold and inert the mental powers would lie,
Without this quick'ning spark of Deity.
To melt the rich materials from the mine,
To bid the mass of intellect refine,
To bend the firm, to animate the cold,
And heav'ns own image stamp on Nature's gold;
To give immortal mind its finest tone,
Oh, Sensibility! is all thy own.
This is th' eternal flame which lights and warms,
In song enchants us and in action charms.

'Tis this that makes the pensive strains of Gray*
Win to the open heart their easy way;
Makes the touch'd spirit glow with kindred fire,
When sweet Serena's poet wakes the lyre:
Makes Portland's face its brightest rapture wear,
When her large bounty smooths the bed of care:
'Tis this that breathes through Sevigne's fair page,
That nameless grace which sooths a second age;
'Tis this, whose charm the soul resistless seize,
And gives Boscawen half her power to please.
Yet why those terrors? Why that anxious care?
Since your last hope† the deathful war *will* dare?
Why dread that energy of soul which leads
To dang'rous glory by heroic deeds?
Why mourn to view his ardent soul aspire?
You fear the son because you knew the sire.
Hereditary valour you deplore;
And dread, yet wish to find one hero more.

* This is meant of the *Elegy in a Country Church yard*, of which exquisite poem *Sensibility* is perhaps the characteristic beauty.

† Viscount Falmouth, admiral Boscawen's only remaining son was then in America, and at the battle of Lexington.

SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER.

A LEGENDARY TALE.

IN TWO PARTS.

Of them who, wrapt in earth so cold,
No more the smiling day shall view,
Should many a tender tale be told,
For many a tender thought is due.—*Langhorne.*

PART I.

O nostra Vita, ch'e si bella in vista!
Com' perde agevolmente in un momento,
Quel, ch'on molt' anni a grand pena s'acquista.—*Petrarca.*

There was a young and valiant knight,
Sir Eldred was his name,
And never did a worthier wight
The rank of knighthood claim.
Where gliding *Tay*, her stream sends forth,
To feed the neighbouring wood,
The ancient glory of the north,
Sir Eldred's castle stood.
The knight was rich as knight might be
In patrimonial wealth;
And rich in nature's gift was he,
In youth, and strength, and health.
He did not think, as some have thought,
Whom honour never crown'd.
The fame a father dearly bought,
Could make the son renown'd,
He better thought, a noble sire,
Who gallant deeds had done,
To deeds of hardihood should fire
A brave and gallant son.
The fairest ancestry on earth
Without desert is poor;
And ev'ry deed of former worth
Is but a claim for more.
Sir Eldred's heart was ever kind,
Alive to pity's call;
A crowd of virtues grac'd his mind,
He lov'd and felt for all.
When merit rais'd the sufferer's name,
He show'rd his bounty then;
And those who could not prove that claim,
He succour'd still as men.
But sacred truth the muse compels
His errors to impart;
And yet the muse reluctant tells
The faults of Eldred's heart.
Though mild and soft as infant love
His fond affections melt;
Though all that kindest spirits prove
Sir Eldred keenly felt:
Yet if the passions storm'd his soul,
By jealousy led on;
The fierce resentment scorn'd controul,
And bore his virtues down,
Not Thule's waves so widely break
To drown the northern shore;
Not Etna's entrails fiercer shake,
Or Scythia's tempest roar.
As when in summer's sweetest day
To fan the fragrant morn,
The sighing breezes softly stray
O'er fields of ripen'd corn;
Sudden the lightning's blast descends,
Deforms the ravag'd fields;
At once the various ruin blends,
And all resistless yields.
But when, to clear his stormy breast,
The sun of reason shone,
And ebbing passions sunk to rest,
And show'd what rage had done:
O then what anguish he betray'd!
His shame how deep, how true!
He view'd the waste his rage had made,
And shudder'd at the view.
The meek-ey'd dawn, in saffron robe,
Proclaim'd the op'ning day,
Up rose the sun to gild the globe,
And hail the new-born May;
The birds their vernal notes repeat,
And glad the thick'ning grove;
And feather'd partners fondly greet
With many a song of love:
When pious Eldred early rose
The Lord of all to hail;

Who life with all its gifts bestows,
  Whose mercies never fail!
That done—he left his woodland glade,
  And journey'd far away;
He lov'd to court the distant shade,
  And through the lone vale stray.
Within the bosom of a wood,
  By circling hills embrac'd,
A little, modest mansion stood,
  Built by the hand of taste;
While many a prouder castle fell,
  This safely did endure;
The house where guardian virtues dwell
  Is sacred and secure.
Of eglantine an humble fence
  Around the mansion stood,
Which serv'd at once to charm the sense,
  And screen an infant wood.
The wood receiv'd an added grace,
  As pleas'd it bent to look,
And view'd its ever verdant face
  Reflected in a brook:
The smallness of the stream did well
  The master's fortunes show;
But little streams may serve to tell
  The source from whence they flow.
This mansion own'd an aged knight,
  And such a man was he,
As heaven just shows to human sight,
  To tell what man should be.
His youth in many a well-fought field
  Was train'd betimes to war:
His bosom, like a well-worn shield,
  Was grac'd with many a scar.
The vigour of a green old age
  His reverend form did bear;
And yet, alas! the warrior-sage
  Had drain'd the dregs of care:
And sorrow more than age can break,
  And wound its hapless prey,
'Twas sorrow furrow'd his firm cheek,
  And turn'd his bright locks gray.
One darling daughter sooth'd his cares,
  A young and beauteous dame,
Sole comfort of his failing years,
  And Birtha was her name.
Her heart a little sacred shrine,
  Where all the Virtues meet,
And holy Hope and Faith divine
  Had claim'd it for their seat.
She lov'd to raise her fragrant bower
  Of wild and rustic taste,
And there she screen'd each fav'rite flower
  From ev'ry ruder blast;
And not a shrub or plant was there
  But did some moral yield;
For wisdom, by a father's care,
  Was found in ev'ry field.
The trees, whose foliage fell away,
  And with the summer died,
He thought an image of decay
  Might lecture human pride:
While fair perennial greens that stood,
  And brav'd the wintry blast,
As types of the fair mind be view'd,
  Which shall for ever last.
He taught her that the gaudiest flowers
  Were seldom fragrant found,
But wasted soon their little powers,
  Dropt useless on the ground:
While the sweet-scented rose shall last,
  And still retain its power,
When life's imperfect day is past
  And beauty's shorter hour.
And here the virgin lov'd to lead
  Her inoffensive day,
And here she oft retir'd to read,
  And oft retir'd to pray.
Embower'd, she grac'd the woodland shades,
  From courts and cities far,
The pride of Caledonian maids,
  The peerless northern star.
As shines that bright and lucid star,
  The glory of the night,
When beaming through the cloudless air
  She sheds her silver light:
So Birtha shone!—But when she spoke
  The muse herself was heard,
As on the ravish'd air she broke,
  And thus her prayer preferr'd:
'O bless thy Birtha, Power Supreme
  In whom I live and move,
And bless me most by blessing him,
  Whom more than life I love.'
She starts to hear a stranger's voice,
  And with a modest grace,
She lifts her meek eye in surprise,
  And see's a stranger's face:
The stranger lost in transport stood,
  Bereft of voice and power,
While she with equal wonder view'd
  Sir Eldred of the bower.
The virgin blush which spreads her cheek
  With nature's purest dye,
And all those dazzling beams which break
  Like morning from her eye—
He view'd them all, and as he view'd
  Drank deeply of delight;
And still his raptur'd eye pursued
  And feasted on the sight.
With silent wonder long they gaz'd,
  And neither silence broke;
At length the smother'd passion blaz'd,
  Enamour'd Eldred spoke:
'O sacred virtue, heav'nly power!
  Thy wond'rous force I feel:
I gaze, I tremble, I adore,
  Yet die my love to tell.
My scorn has oft the dart repell'd
  Which guileful beauty threw;
But goodness heard, and grace beheld,
  Must every heart subdue.'
Quick on the ground her eyes were cast,
  And now as quickly rais'd:—
Just then her father hap'ly past,
  On whom she trembling gaz'd.
Good Ardolph's eye his Bertha meets
  With glances of delight;
And thus with courteous speech he greets
  The young and graceful knight;
'O gallant youth, whoe'er thou art,
  Right welcome to this place!
There's something rises at my heart
  Which says I've seen that face.'
'Thou gen'rous knight,' the youth rejoin'd,
  'Though little known to fame,
I trust I bear a grateful mind—
  Sir Eldred is my name.'
'Sir Eldred?'—Ardolph loud exclaim'd
  'Renown'd for worth and power?

For valour and for virtue fam'd,
Sir Eldred of the bower?
Now make me grateful, righteous heaven,
As thou art good to me,
Since to my aged eyes 'tis given
Sir Eldred's son to see!'
Then Ardolph caught him by the hand,
And gaz'd upon his face,
And to his aged bosom strain'd,
With many a kind embrace.
Again he view'd him o'er and o'er,
And doubted still the truth,
And ask'd what he had ask'd before,
Then thus addresst the youth:
'Come now beneath my roof, I pray,
Some needful rest to take,
And with us many a cheerful day,
Thy friendly sojourn make!
He enter'd at the gate straightway,
Some needful rest to take;
And with them many a cheerful day
Did friendly sojourn make.

PART II.

ONCE—in a social summer's walk,
The gaudy day was fled;
They cheated time with cheerful talk,
When thus Sir Ardolph said:
'Thy father was the firmest friend
That e'er my being blest;
And every virtue heaven could send,
Fast bound him to my breast.
Together did we learn to bear
The casque and ample shield;
Together learn in many a war
The deathful spear to wield.
To make our union still more dear,
We both were doom'd to prove,
What is most sweet and most severe
In heart dissolving love.
The daughter of a neighbouring knight
Did *my* fond heart engage;
And ne'er did heaven the virtues write
Upon a fairer page.
His bosom felt an equal wound,
Nor sigh'd we long in vain;
One summer's sun beheld us bound
In Hymen's holy chain.
Thou wast Sir ELDRED's only child,
Thy father's darling joy;
On me a lovely daughter smil'd,
On me a blooming boy;
But man has woes, has clouds of care
That dim his star of life—
My arms receiv'd the little pair,
The earth's cold breast, my wife.
Forgive, thou gentle knight, forgive,
Fond foolish tears *will* flow;
One day like mine thy heart may heave,
And mourn its lot of wo.
But grant, kind heaven! thou ne'er may'st know
The pangs I now impart;
Nor even feel the parting blow
That rives a husband's heart.
Beside the blooming banks of *Tay*,
My angel's ashes sleep;
And wherefore should her Ardolph stay,
Except to watch and weep?
I bore my beauteous babes away
With many a gushing tear;
I left the blooming banks of *Tay*,
And brought my darlings here.
I watch'd my little household cares,
And formed their growing youth;
And fondly train'd their infant years
To piety and truth.'
'Thy blooming Birtha here I see,'
Sir Eldred straight rejoin'd;
'But why thy son is not with thee,
Resolve my doubting mind.'
When Birtha did the question hear,
She sigh'd, but could not speak;
And many a soft and silent tear
Stray'd down her damask cheek.
Then pass'd o'er good Sir Ardolph's face,
A cast of deadly pale;
But soon compos'd, with manly grace,
He thus renew'd his tale:
'For him my heart too much has bled;
For him, my darling son,
Has sorrow press'd my hoary head;
But heav'n's high will be done!'
Scarce eighteen winter's had revolv'd,
To crown the circling year,
Before my valiant boy resolv'd
The warrior's lance to bear.
Too high I priz'd my native land,
Too dear his fame I held,
T' oppose a parent's stern command,
And keep him from the field.
He left me—left his sister too,
Yet tears bedew'd his face—
What could a feeble old man do?
He burst from my embrace.
O thirst of glory, fatal flame!
O laurels dearly bought!
Yet sweet is death when earn'd with fame—
So virtuous Edwy thought.
Full manfully the brave boy strove,
Though pressing ranks oppose;
But weak the strongest arm must prove
Against an host of foes.
A deadly wound my son receives,
A spear assails his side:
Grief does not kill—for Ardolph lives
To tell that Edwy died.
His long-lov'd mother died again
In Edwy's parting groan;
I wept for her, yet wept in vain—
I wept for both in one.
I would have died—I sought to die,
But heaven restrain'd the thought,
And to my passion-clouded eye
My helpless Birtha brought.
When lo! array'd in robes of light,
A nymph celestial came.
She clear'd the mists that dimm'd my sight—
Religion was her name.
She prov'd the chastisement divine,
And bade me kiss the rod;
She taught this rebel heart of mine
Submission to its God.
Religion taught me to sustain
What nature bade me feel;
And piety reliev'd the pain
Which time can never heal.'
He ceas'd—with sorrow and delight
The tale Sir Eldred hears:
Then weeping cries—'Thou noble knight,

For thanks accept my tears.
O Ardolph, might I dare aspire
To claim so bright a boon!—
Good old Sir Eldred was my sire—
And thou hast lost a son.
And though I want a worthier plea
To urge so dear a cause;
Yet, let me to thy bosom be
What once thy Edwy was.
My trembling tongue its aid denies;
For thou may'st disapprove;
Then read it in my ardent eyes,
Oh! read the tale of love.
Thy beauteous Birtha!'—'Gracious power!
How could I e'er repine,'
Cries Ardolph, 'since I see this hour?
Yes—Birtha shall be thine.'
A little transient gleam of red
Shot faintly o'er her face,
And ev'ry trembling feature spread
With sweet disorder'd grace.
The tender father kindly smil'd
With fulness of content;
And fondly ey'd his darling child,
Who, bashful, blush'd consent.
O then to paint the vast delight
That fill'd Sir Eldred's heart,
To tell the transports of the knight,
Would mock the Muse's art.
But ev'ry kind and gracious soul,
Where gentle passions dwell,
Will better far conceive the whole,
Than any muse can tell.
The more the knight his Birtha knew,
The more he priz'd the maid;
Some worth each day produc'd to view
Some grace each hour betray'd.
The virgin too was fond to charm
The dear accomplish'd youth;
His single breast she strove to warm,
And crown'd with love, his truth.
Unlike the dames of modern days,
Who *general* homage claim;
Who court the *universal* gaze,
And pant for *public* fame.
Then beauty but on merit smil'd,
Nor were her chaste smiles sold;
No venal father gave his child,
For grandeur, or for gold.
The ardour of young Eldred's flame
But ill could brook delay,
And oft he press'd the maid to name
A speedy nuptial day.
The fond impatience of his breast
'Twas all in vain to hide,
But she his eager suit represt
With modest maiden pride.
When oft Sir Eldred press'd the day
Which was to crown his truth,
The thoughtful sire would sigh and say,
'O happy state of youth!
It little recks the woes which wait
To scare it dreams of joy;
Nor thinks to-morrow's alter'd fate
May all those dreams destroy.
And though the flatterer Hope deceives,
And painted prospects shows;
Yet man, still cheated, still believes,
Till death the bright scene close.
So look'd *my* bride, so sweetly mild,
On me her beauty's slave;
But whilst she look'd, and whilst she smil'd
She sunk into the grave.
Yet, O forgive an old man's care,
Forgive a father's zeal;
Who fondly loves must greatly fear,
Who fears must greatly feel.
Once more in soft and sacred bands
Shall Love and Hymen meet;
To-morrow shall unite your hands,
And—be your bliss complete!'
The rising sun inflam'd the sky,
The golden orient blush'd;
But Birtha's cheeks a sweeter dye,
A brighter crimson flush'd.
The priest in milk-white vestments clad,
Perform'd the mystic rite;
Love lit the hallow'd torch that led
To Hymen's chaste delight.
How feeble language were to speak
Th' immeasurable joy,
That fir'd Sir Eldred's ardent cheek,
And triumph'd in his eye!
Sir Ardolph's pleasure stood confest,
A pleasure all his own;
The guarded pleasure of a breast
Which many a grief had known.
'Twas such a sober sense of joy
As angels well might keep
A joy chastis'd by piety,
A joy prepared to weep.
To recollect her scatter'd thought,
And shun the noon-tide hour,
The lovely bride in secret sought
The coolness of her bower.
Long she remain'd—th' enamour'd knight,
Impatient at her stay;
And all unfit to taste delight
When Birtha was away;
Betakes him to the secret bower;
His footsteps softly move;
Impell'd by ev'ry tender power,
He steals upon his love.
O, horror! horror! blasting sight!
He sees his Birtha's charms,
Reclin'd with melting, fond delight,
Within a stranger's arms.
Wild frenzy fires his frantic hand.
Distracted at the sight,
He flies to where the lovers stand;
And stabs the stranger knight.
'Die, traitor, die! thy guilty flames
Demand th' avenging steel!'—
'It is my brother,' she exclaims!
''Tis Edwy—Oh farewell!'
An aged peasant, Edwy's guide,
The good old Ardolph sought;
He told him that his bosom's pride,
His Edwy, he had brought.
O how the father's feelings melt!
How faint and how revive!
Just so the Hebrew patriarch felt,
To find his son alive.
'Let me behold my darling's face,
And bless him ere I die!'
Then with a swift and vigorous pace,
He to the bower did hie;
O sad reverse!—Sunk on the ground
His slaughter'd son he view'd;
And dying Birtha, close he found

In brother's blood imbru'd.
Cold, speechless, senseless, Eldred near,
Gaz'd on the deed he'd done;
Like the blank statue of *Despair*,
Or *Madness* grav'd in stone.
The father saw—so Jephthah stood,
So turn'd his wo-fraught eye,
When the dear, destin'd child he view'd
His zeal had doom'd to die.
He look'd the wo he could not speak,
And on the pale corse prest
His wan discolour'd, dying cheek,
And silent sunk to rest.
Then Birtha faintly rais'd her eye,
Which long had ceas'd to stream.
On Eldred fix'd, with many a sigh,
Its dim departing beam.
The cold, cold dews of hastening death,
Upon her pale face stand;
And quick and short her failing breath,
And tremulous her hand.
The cold, cold dews of hastening death,
The dim departing eye,
The quiv'ring hand, the short quick breath,
He view'd—and did not die.
He saw her spirit mount in air,
Its kindred skies to seek!
His heart its anguish could not bear,
And yet it would not break.
The mournful muse forbears to tell
How wretched Eldred died;
She draws the Grecian* painter's veil,
The vast distress to hide.
Yet heaven's decrees are just and wise,
And man is born to bear:
Joy is the portion of the skies,
Beneath them all is care.
Yet blame not heav'n; 'tis erring man,
Who mars his own best joys;
Whose passions uncontroll'd, the plan
Of promis'd bliss destroys.
Had Eldred *paus'd* before the blow,
His hand had never err'd;
What guilt, what complicated wo,
His soul had then been spar'd!
The deadliest wound with which we bleed,
Our crimes inflict alone;
Man's *mercies* from God's hand proceed,
His *miseries* from his *own*.

* In the celebrated picture of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, Timanthes having exhausted every image of grief in the bystanders, threw a veil over the face of the father, whose sorrow he was utterly unable to express. Plin. book xxxv.

THE BLEEDING ROCK:

OR

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF A NYMPH INTO STONE

——— The annual wound allur'd
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate,
In amorous ditties all a summer's day;
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded.—*Milton.*

Where beauteous *Belmont* rears her modest brow
To view *Sabrina's* silver wave below,
Liv'd young Ianthe, fair as beauty's queen;
She reign'd unrivall'd in the sylvan scene;
Hers every charm of symmetry and grace,
Which aids the triumph of the fairest face;
With all that softer elegance of mind,
By genius heighten'd, and by taste refin'd
Yet early was she doom'd the child of care,
For hapless love subdu'd th' ill-fated fair,
Ah! what avails each captivating grace,
The form enchanting, or the fairest face?
Or what each beauty of the heav'n-born mind,
The soul superior, or the taste refin'd?
Beauty but serves destruction to insure,
And *sense* to feel the pang it cannot cure.
Each neighb'ring youth aspir'd to gain her hand,
And many a suitor came from many a land:
But all in vain each neighb'ring youth aspir'd,
And distant suitors all in vain admir'd.
Averse to hear, yet fearful to offend,
The lover she refus'd she made a friend:
Her meek rejection wore so mild a face,
More like acceptance seem'd it, than disgrace.
Young Polydore, the pride of rural swains,
Was wont to visit *Belmont's* blooming plains.
Who has not heard how Polydore could throw
Th' unerring dart to wound the flying doe?
How leave the swiftest at the race behind,
How mount the courser, and outstrip the wind?
With melting sweetness, or with magic fire,
Breathe the soft flute, or sweep the well-strung lyre?
From that fam'd lyre no vulgar music sprung,
The Graces tun'd it, and Apollo strung.
Apollo too was once a shepherd swain,
And fed the flock, and grac'd the rustic plain:
He taught what charms to rural life belong,
The social sweetness, and the sylvan song;
He taught fair Wisdom in her grove to woo,
Her joys how precious, and her wants how few!
The savage herds in mute attention stood,
And ravish'd *Echo* fill'd the vocal wood;
The sacred sisters, stooping from their sphere,
Forgot their golden harps, intent to hear;
Till Heaven the scene survey'd with jealous eyes,
And Jove, in envy, call'd him to the skies.
Young Polydore was rich in large domains,
In smiling pastures, and in flow'ry plains;
With these, he boasted each exterior charm,
To win the prudent, and the cold to warm;

The fairest semblance of desert he bore,
And each fictitious mark of goodness wore;
Could act the tenderness he never felt,
In sorrow soften, and in anguish melt.
The sigh elaborate, the fraudful tear,
The joy dissembled, and the well feign'd fear,
All these were his; and his each treach'rous art,
That steals the guileless and unpractis'd heart.
Too soon he heard of fair Ianthe's fame,
'Twas each enamour'd shepherd's fav'rite theme;
Return'd the rising, and the setting sun,
The shepherd's fav'rite theme was never done.
They prais'd her wit, her worth, her shape, her air!
And even inferior beauties own'd her fair.
Such sweet perfection all his wonder moved:
He saw, admired, nay, fancied that he loved:
But Polydore no gen'rous passion knew,
Lost to all truth in feigning to be true.
No lasting tenderness could warm a heart,
Too vain to feel, too selfish to impart.
Cold as the snows of Rhodope descend,
And with the chilling wave of Hebrus blend;
So cold the breast where Vanity presides,
And the whole subject soul absorbs and guides.
Too well he knew to make his conquest sure,
Win her soft heart, yet keep his own secure.
So oft he told the well imagin'd tale,
So oft he swore—how should he *not* prevail?
The well-imagin'd tale the nymph believ'd;
Too unsuspecting not to be deceiv'd:
She lov'd the youth, she thought herself belov'd,
Nor blush'd to praise whom every maid approv'd.
The conquest once achiev'd, the brightest fair,
When conquer'd, was no longer worth his care:
When to the world her passion he could prove,
Vain of his pow'r, he jested at her love.
The perjur'd youth, from sad Ianthe far
To win fresh triumphs, wages cruel war.
With other nymphs behold the wand'rer rove,
And tell the story of Ianthe's love;
He mocks her easy faith, insults her wo,
Nor pities tears himself had taught to flow.
To sad Ianthe soon the tale was borne,
How Polydore to treach'ry added scorn.
And now her eyes' soft radiance 'gan to fail,
And now the crimson of her cheek grew pale;
The lily there in faded beauty shows
Its sickly empire o'er the vanquish'd rose.
Devouring Sorrow marks her for his prey,
And, slow and certain, mines his silent way.
Yet, as apace her ebbing life declin'd,
Increasing strength sustain'd her firmer mind.
'O had my heart been hard as his,' she cried,
'An hapless victim thus I had not died:
If there be gods, and gods there surely are,
Insulted virtue doubtless is their care.
Then hasten, righteous Powers; my tedious fate,
Shorten my woes, and end my mortal date:
Quick let your power transform this failing frame,
Let me be any thing but what I am!
And since the cruel woes I'm doom'd to feel,
Proceed, alas! from having lov'd too well:
Grant me some form where love can have no part,
No human weakness reach my guarded heart;
Where no soft touch of passion can be felt,
No fond affection this weak bosom melt.
If Pity has not left your blest abodes,
Change me to flinty adamant, ye gods!
To hardest rock, or monumental stone,
So may I know no more the pangs I've known;
So shall I thus no farther torments prove,
Nor taunting rivals say she died for love:
For sure, if aught can aggravate our wo,
'Tis the feign'd pity of a prosp'rous foe.'
Thus pray'd the nymph, and straight the Pow'rs addrest,
Accord the weeping suppliant's sad request.
Then strange to tell! if rural folks say true,
To harden'd rock the stiff'ning damsel grew,
No more her shapeless features can be known,
Stone is her body, and her limbs are stone;
The growing rock invades her beauteous face,
And quickly petrifies each living grace;
The stone, her stature nor her shape retains,
The nymph is vanish'd, but the rock remains.
No vestige now of human shape appears.
No cheeks for blushes, and no eyes for tears:
Yet—strange the marvels poets can impart!
Unchang'd, unchill'd, remain'd the glowing heart;
Its vital spirits destin'd still to keep,
It scorn'd to mingle with the marble heap.
When babbling Fame the wondrous tidings bore,
Grief seiz'd the soul of perjur'd Polydore;
And now the falsehood of his soul appears,
And now his broken vows assail his ears.
Appall'd his smitten fancy seems to view
The nymph so lovely, and the friend so true.
For since her absence, all the virgin train,
His admiration sought to win in vain.
Though not to keep him ev'n Ianthe knew,
From vanity alone his falsehood grew:
O let the youthful heart, thus warn'd beware,
Of vanity, how deep, how wide the snare;
That half the mischiefs youth and beauty know,
From Vanity's exhaustless fountain flow.
Now deep remorse deprives his soul of rest:
And deep compunction wounds his guilty breast:
Then to the fatal spot in haste he flew,
Eager some vestige of the maid to view,
The shapeless rock he mark'd, but found no trace
Of lost Ianthe's form, Ianthe's face.
He fix'd his streaming eyes upon the stone,
'And take sweet maid,' he cried, 'my parting groan;
Since we are doom'd thus terribly to part,
No other nymph shall ever share my heart;
Thus only I'm absolv'd'—he rashly cried,
Then plung'd a deadly poinard in his side!
Fainting, the steel he grasp'd, and as he fell
The weapon pierc'd the rock he lov'd so well;
The guiltless steel assail'd the living part,
And stabb'd the vital, vulnerable heart.
And though the rocky mass was pale before,
Behold it ting'd with ruddy streams of gore!
The life-blood issuing from the wounded stone,
Blends with the crimson current of his own;
From Polydore's fresh wound it flow'd in part,
But chief emitted from Ianthe's heart.
And though revolving ages since have past,
The meeting torrents undiminish'd last;
Still gushes out the sanguine stream amain,
The standing wonder of the stranger swain
Now once a year, so rustic records tell,

When o'er the heath resounds the midnight bell;
On eve of midsummer, that foe to sleep,
What time young maids their annual vigils keep,
The tell-tale shrub,* fresh gather'd to declare
The swains who false, from those who constant are;
When ghosts in clanking chains the church-yard walk,
And to the wond'ring ear of fancy talk:
When the scar'd maid steals trembling thro' the grove,
To kiss the grave of him who died for love;
When, with long watchings, Care at length oppress'd,
Steals broken pauses of uncertain rest;
Nay, Grief short snatches of repose can take,
And nothing but Despair is quite awake;
Then, at that hour, so still, so full of fear,
When all things horrible to thought appear,
Is perjur'd Polydore observ'd to rove
A ghastly spectre through the gloomy grove;
Then to the rock, the *Bleeding-rock* repair,
Where, sadly sighing it dissolves to air.

* Midsummer-men, consulted as oracular by village maids.

Still when the hours of solemn rites return,
The village train in sad procession mourn;
Pluck ev'ry weed which might the spot disgrace,
And plant the fairest field flowers in their place.
Around no noxious plant, or flow'ret grows,
But the first daffodil, and earliest rose;
The snow-drop spreads its whitest blossom here,
And golden cowslips grace the vernal year:
Here the pale primrose takes a fairer hue,
And ev'ry violet boasts a brighter blue.
Here builds the wood-lark, here the faithful dove
Laments his lost, or woos his living love.
Secure from harm is ev'ry hallow'd nest,
The spot is sacred where true lovers rest.
To guard the rock from each malignant sprite,
A troop of guardian spirits watch by night;
Aloft in air each takes his little stand,
The neighb'ring hill is hence call'd *Fairy Land*.*

* By contraction, *Fairland*, a hill well known in Somersetshire: not far from this is *The Bleeding Rock*, from which constantly issues a crimson current. A desire to account for this appearance, gave rise to a whimsical conversation, which produced these slight verses.

ODE.

FROM H. M. AT BRISTOL, TO DRAGON, MR. GARRICK'S HOUSE DOG, AT HAMPTON.

I. Dragon! since lyrics are the mode,
To thee I dedicate my ode,
And reason good I plead:
Are those who cannot write, to blame
To draw their hopes of future fame,
From those who cannot read?
II. O could I like that nameless wight,*
Find the choice minute when to write,
The *mollia tempora fandi!*
Like his, my muse should learn to whistle
A true *heroical epistle*,
In strains which ne'er can die.
III. Father of lyrics, tuneful Horace!
Can thy great shade do nothing for us
To mend the British lyre?
Our luckless bards have broke the strings,
Seiz'd the scar'd muses, pluck'd their wings,
And put out all their fire.†
IV. Dragon! thou tyrant of the yard,
Great namesake of that furious guard
That watch'd the fruits Hesperian!
Thy choicer treasures safely keep,
Nor snatch one moment's guilty sleep,
Fidelity's criterion.
V. O Dragon! change with me thy fate,
To give me up thy place and state,
And I will give thee mine:
I, left to think, and thou to feed!
My mind enlarg'd, thy body freed,
How blest *my* lot and *thine!*
VI. Then shalt thou scent the rich regale
Of turtle and diluting ale,
Nay, share the sav'ry bit;

* See the admirable epistle to sir William Chambers.
† A profusion of odes had appeared about this time, which strikingly violated all the rules of lyrical composition.

And see, what thou hast never seen,
For thou hast but at Hampton been,
A feast devoid of wit.
VII. Oft shalt thou snuff the smoking venison,
Devour'd *alone*, by hungry denizen,
So fresh, thoul't long to tear it;
Though Flaccus* tells a diff'rent tale
Of social souls who chose it stale,
Because their *friends* should share it.
VIII. And then on me what joys would wait,
Were I the guardian of thy gate,
How useless bolt and latch!
How vain were locks, and bars how vain,
To shield from harm the household train
Whom I, from love, would watch!
IX. Not that 'twould crown with joy my life
That Bowden,† or that Bowden's wife,
Brought me my daily pickings:
Though she, accelerating fate,
Decrees the scanty moral date
Of turkeys and of chickens!
X. Though fir'd with innocent ambition,
Bowden, great Nature's rhetorician,
More flow'rs than Burke produces;
And though he 's skill'd more roots to find,
Than ever stock'd an Hebrew's mind,
And knows their various uses.
XI. I'd get my master's ways by rote,
Ne'er would I bark at ragged coat,
Nor tear the tatter'd sinner;
Like him I'd love the dog of merit
Caress the cur of broken spirit,
And give them all a dinner.
XII. Nor let me pair his blue-ey'd dame
With Venus' or Minerva's name,

* Hor. lib. ii. Sat. 2.
† The gardener and poultry woman at Hampton.

One warrior, one coquet;
No, Pallas and the queen of Beauty
Shunn'd, or betray'd that nuptial duty,
Which *she* so high has set.
XIII. Whene'er I heard the rattling coach
Proclaim their long-desir'd approach,
How would I haste to greet 'em!
Nor ever feel I wore a chain,
Till, starting, I perceiv'd with pain
I could not fly to meet 'em!
XIV. The master loves his sylvan shades,
Here, with the nine melodious maids,
His choicest hours are spent:
Yet shall I hear some wittling cry,
(Such wittling from my presence fly!)
'Garrick will soon repent:
XV. 'Again you'll see him, never fear;
Some half a dozen times a year
He still will charm the age;
Accustom'd long to be admir'd,
Of shades and streams he'll soon be tir'd,
And languish for the stage.'
XVI. Peace! To his solitude he bears
The full-blown fame of thirty years;
He bears a nation's praise;
He bears his lib'ral, polish'd mind,
His worth, his wit, his sense refin'd
He bears his well-earn'd bays.
XVII. When warm admirers drop a tear
Because this sun has left his sphere,
And set before his time;
I who have felt and lov'd his rays,
What they condemn will loudly praise,
And call the deed sublime.
XVIII. How wise long-pamper'd with applause,
To make a voluntary pause
And lay his laurels down!
Boldly repelling each strong claim,
To dare assert to Wealth and Fame,
'Enough of both I've known.'
XIX. How wise! a short retreat to steal,
The vanity of life to feel,
And from its cares to fly:
To act one calm, domestic scene,
Earth's bustle, and the grave between,
Retire, and learn to die!

EPITAPHS.

ON THE REVEREND MR. PENROSE,

Thirty-two years Vicar of St. Gluvias, Cornwall.

If social manners, if the gentlest mind,
If zeal for God, and love for human kind,
If all the charities which life endear,
May claim affection, or demand a tear,
Then o'er Penrose's venerable urn
Domestic love may weep, and friendship mourn.
The path of duty still, untir'd, he trod,
He walk'd in safety, for he walk'd with God!
When past the power of precept and of pray'r,
Yet still his flock remain'd the shepherd's care;
Their wants still kindly watchful to supply,
He taught his best, last lesson, how to die!

ON MRS. BLANFORD.

Meek shade, farewell! go seek that quiet shore
Where sin shall vex, and sorrow wound no more;
Thy lowly worth obtains that final bliss,
Which pride disdains to seek, and wit may miss.
That path thou'st found which science cannot teach,
But faith and goodness never fail to reach:
Then share the joy the words of life impart,
The Vision promis'd to the *pure in heart.*

ON MRS. LITTLE,

In Redcliff Church, England.

O could this verse her fair example spread,
And teach the living while it prais'd the dead!
Then, reader! should it speak her hope divine,
Not to record her faith, but strengthen thine;
Then should her ev'ry virtue stand confest,
Till ev'ry virtue kindle in thy breast.
But, if thou slight the monitory strain,
And she has liv'd, to thee at least, in vain;
Yet let her death, an awful lesson give,
The dying Christian speaks to all that live.'
Enough for her that here her ashes rest,
Till God's own plaudit shall her worth attest.

ON GENERAL LAWRENCE,

Memorable for his conquests in India, and for his clemency to the vanquished.

On a Monument erected by Sir Robert Palk.

Born to command, to conquer, and to spare,
As mercy mild, yet terrible as war,
Here Lawrence rests in death; while living fame
From Thames to Ganges wafts his honour'd name.
To him this frail memorial Friendship rears,
Whose noblest monument 's a nation's tears;
Whose deeds on fairer columns stand engrav'd,
In provinces preserv'd and cities sav'd.

TO THE MEMORY OF

MRS. ELIZABETH IVES,

Aged Ninety-one, of Northampton.

Her pious and useful Life,
was extended to an honourable old age,
and closed by an exemplary Death,
Her *Charity* had its source
In *Religion:*
Her love of her neighbour
was the genuine effect
of her love of God:
Her *Resignation*
was the Fruit of her *Faith,*
and she died in *Hope*
because she had lived
A Christian.

ON THE REVEREND MR. HUNTER,

Who receiv'd a degree from the University of Oxford for his work against Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy.

Go, happy spirit, seek that blissful land
Where zealous Michael leads the glorious band
Of those who fought for truth; blest spirit, go
And perfect all the good begun below:
Go, hear applauding saints, delighted, tell
How vanquish'd Falsehood, at thy bidding fell!
Blest in that heav'n whose paths thy virtue sought;
Blest in that God whose cause thou well hast fought;
O let thy honour'd shade *his* care approve,
Who this memorial rears of filial love:
A son, whose father, living, was his pride;
A son who mourns that such a father died.

ON C. DICEY, Esq.

In Claybrook Church, Leicestershire.

O thou, or friend or stranger, who shall tread
These solemn mansions of the silent dead!
Think, when this record to inquiring eyes,
No more shall tell the spot where Dicey lies;
When this frail marble, faithless to its trust,
Mould'ring itself, resigns its moulder'd dust;
When time shall fail, and Nature's self decay,
And earth, and sun, and skies dissolve away;
Thy soul, this consummation shall survive,
Defy the wreck, and but *begin* to live.
This truth, long slighted, let these ashes teach,
Though cold, instruct you, and though silent preach:
O pause! reflect, repent, resolve, amend!
Life has no length, eternity no end!

ON A YOUNG LADY.

Go, peaceful shade! exchange for sin and care
The glorious palm which patient suff'rers wear!
Go, take the meed victorious meekness gains,
Go, wear the crown triumphant faith obtains.
Those silent graces which the good conceal,
The day of dread disclosure shall reveal;
Then shall thy mild, retiring virtues rise,
And God, both judge and witness, give the prize.

INSCRIPTION ON A CENOTAPH IN A GARDEN.

ERECTED TO A DECEASED FRIEND.

Ye lib'ral souls who rev'rence Friendship's name,
Who boast her blessings, and who feel her flame;
Oh! if from early youth one friend you've lov'd,
Whom warm affection chose, and taste approv'd;
If you have known what anguish rends the heart,
When such, so known, so lov'd, for ever part;
Approach—For you the mourner rears this stone,
To sooth your sorrows, and record his own.

ON THE REVEREND MR. LOVE.

In the Cathedral, at Bristol.

When worthless grandeur fills th' embellish'd urn,
No poignant grief attends the sable bier:
But when distinguish'd excellence we mourn,
Deep is the sorrow, genuine is the tear.
Stranger! should'st thou approach this awful shrine,
The merits of the honour'd dead to seek;
The friend, the son, the Christian, the divine,
Let those who knew him, those who lov'd him speak.
Oh let them in some pause of anguish say,
What zeal inflam'd, what faith enlarg'd his breast!
How glad the unfetter'd spirit wing'd its way
From earth to heav'n, from blessing to be blest!

ON THE REVEREND

SIR JAMES STONHOUSE, BART. M. D.

In the Chapel at the Hot-Wells, Bristol.

Here rest awhile, in happier climes to shine,
The orator, physician, and divine:
'Twas his, like Luke, the double task to fill,
To heal the nat'ral and the moral ill.
You, whose awaken'd hearts his labours blest,
Where ev'ry truth, by ev'ry grace was drest;
Oh! let your lives evince that still you feel
Th' effective influence of his fervent zeal.
One spirit rescued from eternal wo
Were nobler fame than marble can bestow;
That lasting monument will mock decay
And stand, triumphant, at the final day.

ON SARAH STONHOUSE,

Second wife of the Rev. Sir James Stonhouse, Bart.

Come resignation! wipe the human tear,
Domestic anguish drops o'er Virtue's bier;
Bid selfish sorrow hush the fond complaint,
Nor, from the God she lov'd, detain the saint,
Truth, meekness, patience, honour'd shade were thine;
And holy hope, and charity divine:
Though these thy forfeit being could not save,
Thy faith subdu'd the terrors of the grave.
Oh! if thy *living* excellence could teach,
Death has a loftier emphasis of speech:
Let death thy strongest lesson then impart;
And write *prepare to die*, on ev'ry heart.

THE FOOLISH TRAVELLER:

OR, A GOOD INN IS A BAD HOME.

There was a prince of high degree,
As great and good as prince could be;
Much pow'r and wealth were in his hand,
With lands and lordships at command,
One son, a fav'rite son, he had,
An idle thoughtless kind of lad;
Whom, spite of all his follies past,
He meant to make his heir at last.

The son escap'd to foreign lands,
And broke his gracious sire's commands;
Far, as he fancied, from his sight,
In each low joy he took delight.
The youth, detesting peace and quiet,
Indulg'd in vice, expense, and riot;
Of each wild pleasure rashly tasted,
Till health declined, and substance wasted
The tender sire, to pity prone,
Promis'd to pardon what was done;
And, would he certain terms fulfil
He should receive a kingdom still.
The youth the *pardon* little minded,
So much his sottish soul was blinded;
But though he mourn'd no past transgression,
He lik'd the future rich possession.
He lik'd the kingdom when obtain'd,
But not the terms on which 'twas gain'd;
He hated pain and self-denial,
Chose the reward, but shunn'd the trial.
He knew his father's power how great,
How glorious too the promis'd state!
At length resolves no more to roam
But straight to seek his father's home.
His sire had sent a friend to say,
He must be cautious on his way;
Told him what road he must pursue,
And always keep his home in view.
The thoughtless youth set out indeed,
But soon he slacken'd in his speed;
For ev'ry trifle by the way
Seduc'd his idle heart astray.
By ev'ry casual impulse sway'd,
On ev'ry slight pretence he stay'd;
To each, to all, his passions bend,
He quite forgets his journey's end.
For ev'ry sport, for ev'ry song,
He halted as he pass'd along;
Caught by each idle sight he saw,
He'd loiter e'en to pick a straw.
Whate'er was present seiz'd his soul,
A feast, a show, a brimming bowl;
Contented with this vulgar lot,
His father's house he quite forgot.
Those slight refreshments by the way,
Which were but meant his strength to stay,
So sunk his soul in sloth and sin,
He look'd no farther than his inn.
His father's friend would oft appear
And sound the *promise* in his ear;
Oft would he rouse him, 'Sluggard come!
This is thy inn, and not thy home.'
Displeas'd he answers, 'Come what will,
Of present bliss I'll take my fill;
In vain you plead, in vain I hear,
Those joys are distant, these are near.'
Thus perish'd, lost to worth and truth,
In sight of home this hapless youth;
While beggars, foreigners, and poor,
Enjoy'd the father's boundless store.

APPLICATION.

My fable, reader, speaks to thee,
In God this bounteous father see;
And in his thoughtless offspring trace,
The sinful, wayward, human race.
The friend, the generous father sent.
To rouse, and to reclaim him, meant
The faithful minister you'll find,
Who calls the wand'ring, warns the blind.
Reader, awake! this youth you blame,
Are not *you* doing just the same?
Mindless your comforts are but given
To help you on your way to heav'n.
The pleasures which beguile the road,
The flow'rs with which your path is strew'd
To these your whole desires you bend
And quite forget your journey's end.
The meanest toys your soul entice,
A feast, a song, a game at dice;
Charm'd with your present paltry lot,
Eternity is quite forgot.
Then listen to a warning friend,
Who bids you mind your journey's end;
A wand'ring pilgrim here you roam;
This world's your *inn*, the next your *home*.

THE IMPOSSIBILITY CONQUERED:

OR, LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF.

IN THE MANNER OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

THE OBJECTOR.

I. EACH man who lives the Scriptures prove,
Must as himself his neighbour love;
But though the precept 's full of beauty,
'Tis an impracticable duty:
I'll prove how hard it is to find
A lover of this wond'rous kind.
II. Who loves himself to great excess,
You'll grant *must* love his neighbour less;
When self engrosses all the heart
How can another have a part?
Then if self-love most men enthral,
A neighbour's share is none at all.
III. Say, can the man who hoards up pelf
E'er love his neighbour as himself?
For if he did, would he not labour
To hoard a little for his neighbour?
Then tell me, friend, can hoarding elves
E'er love their neighbour as themselves?
IV. The man whose heart is bent on *pleasure*
Small love will to his neighbour measure:
Who solely studies his own good,
Can't love another if he would.
Then how can pleasure-hunting elves
E'er love their neighbour as themselves!
V. Can he whom sloth and loitering please
E'er love his neighbour like his *ease?*
Or he who feels ambition's flame
Loves he his neighbour like his *fame?*
Such lazy, or such soaring elves
Can't love their neighbour as themselves.
VI. He, whose gross appetites enslave him,
Who spends or feasts the wealth God gave him,
Full, pamper'd, gorg'd at ev'ry meal,
He *cannot* for the empty feel.
How can such *gormandizing* elves
E'er love their neighbour as themselves?

VII. Then since the man who lusts for *gold*,
Since he who is to *pleasure* sold;
Who soars in *pride*, or sinks in *ease*,
His neighbour will not serve or please;
Where shall we hope the man to find
To fill this great command inclin'd?
VIII. I dare not blame God's holy word,
Nor censure Scripture as absurd;
But sure the rule 's of no avail
If plac'd so high that all must fail;
And 'tis *impossible* to prove
That *any* can his neighbour love.

THE ANSWERER.

IX. Yes, such there are of heav'nly mould,
Unwarp'd by pleasure, ease, or gold;
He who fulfils the nobler part
By loving God with all his heart,
He, only he, the Scriptures prove,
Can, as himself, his *neighbour* love.
X. Then join, to make a perfect plan,
The love of God to love of man;
Your heart in union both must bring,
This is the stream, and that the spring;
This done, no more in vain you'll labour,
A Christian can't *but* love his neighbour.
XI. If then the rule 's too hard to please ye,
Turn Christian, and you'll find it easy.
'Still, 'tis impossible.' you'll cry,
'In vain shall feeble nature try.'
'Tis true; but know a Christian is a creature
Who does things quite impossible to nature.

INSCRIPTION

IN A BEAUTIFUL RETREAT, CALLED FAIRY BOWER.

Airy spirits, you who love
Cooling bow'r, or shady grove:
Streams that murmur as they flow,
Zephyrs bland that softly blow;
Babbling echo, or the tale
Of the love-lorn nightingale;
Hither airy spirits, come,
This is your peculiar home,
If you love a verdant glade,
If you love a noon-tide shade,
Hither, sylphs and fairies fly,
Unobserv'd of earthly eye.
Come, and wander ev'ry night,
By the moon-beam's glimm'ring light
And again at early day
Brush the silver dews away.
Mark where first the daisies blow,
Where the bluest violets grow;
Where the sweetest linnet sings,
Where the earliest cowslip springs;
Where the largest acorn lies.
Precious in a fairy's eyes;
Sylphs, though unconfin'd to place,
Love to fill an acorn's space.
Come, and mark within what bush
Builds the blackbird or the thrush;
Great his joy who first espies,
Greater his who spares the prize!
Come, and watch the hallow'd bow'r,
Chase the insect from the flow'r;
Little offices like these,
Gentle souls and fairies please.
Mortals! form'd of grosser clay,
From our haunts keep far away;
Or, if you should dare appear,
See that you from vice are clear.
Folly's minion, Fashion's fool,
Mad Ambition's restless tool!
Slave of passion, slave of pow'r,
Fly, ah fly! this tranquil bow'r!
Son of Av'rice, soul of frost,
Wretch! of Heav'n abhorred the most,
Learn to pity others' wants,
Or avoid these hallow'd haunts.
Eye unconscious of a tear,
When Afflictions train appear;
Heart that never heav'd a sigh,
For another, come not nigh.
But, ye darling sons of Heav'n,
Giving freely what was giv'n;
You, whose lib'ral hand dispense
The blessings of benevolence:
You, who wipe the tearful eye,
You, who stop the rising sigh;
You, whose souls have understood
The luxury of doing good—
Come, ye happy virtuous few,
Open is my bow'r to you;
You, these mossy banks may press;
You, each guardian fay shall bless.

THE BAD BARGAIN:

OR, THE WORLD SET UP TO SALE.

The Devil, as the Scriptures show,
Tempts sinful mortals high and low;
And acting well his various part,
Suits every bribe to every heart:
See where the prince of darkness stands
With baits for souls in both his hands.
To one he offers empires whole,
And gives a sceptre for a soul;
To one, he freely gives in barter,
A peerage, or a star and garter;
To one he pays polite attention,
And begs him just to take a pension.
Some are so fir'd with love of fame,
He bribes them by an empty name;
For fame they toil, they preach, they write,
Give alms, build hospitals or fight;
For human praise renounce salvation,
And sell their souls for reputation.
But the great gift, the mighty bribe,
Which Satan pours amid the tribe,
Which millions seize with eager haste,
And all desire at least to taste,

Is—plodding reader!—what d'ye think?
Alas!—tis money—money—chink!
'Round the wide world the tempter flies,
Presents to view the glittering prize;
See how he hastes from shore to shore,
And how the nations all adore:
Souls flock by thousands to be sold,
Smit with the fond desire of gold.
See, at yon needy tradesman's shop,
The universal tempter stop;
'Would'st thou,' he cries, 'increase thy treasures,
Use lighter weights and scantier measures,
Thus thou shalt thrive:' the trader's willing,
And sells his soul to get a shilling.
Next Satan to a farmer hies,
'I scorn to cheat,' the farmer cries:
Yet still his heart on wealth is bent,
And so the Devil is content;
Now markets rise, and riches roll,
And Satan quite secures his soul.
Mark next yon cheerful youth so jolly.
So fond of laughter and of folly;
He hates a stingy griping fellow,
But gets each day a little mellow;
To Satan too he sells his soul
In barter for a flowing bowl.
But mark again yon lass a spinning,
See how the tempter is beginning:
Some beau presents a top-knot nice,
She grants her virtue as the price;
A slave to vanity's controul,
She, for a riband, sells her soul!
Thus Satan tries each different state:
With mighty bribes he tempts the great;
The poor, with equal force he plies,
But wins them with a humbler prize:
Has gentler arts for young beginners,
And fouler sins for older sinners.
Oft too he cheats our mortal eyes,
For Satan father is of lies;
A thousand swindling tricks he plays us,
And promises, but never pays us;
Thus we poor fools are strangely caught,
And find we've sold our souls for nought.
Nay, oft, with quite a juggler's art,
He bids the proffer'd gift depart;
Sets some gay joy before our face,
Then claps a trouble in its place;
Turns up some loss for promis'd gain,
And conjures pleasure into pain.
Be wise then, oh! ye worldly tribe,
Nor sell your conscience for a bribe;
When Satan tempts you to begin,
Resist him, and refuse to sin:
Bad is the bargain on the whole,
To gain the world and lose the soul!

BALLADS.

ROBERT AND RICHARD.

OR, THE GHOST OF POOR MOLLY,

Who was drowned in Richard's Mill-pond.

Tune—'Collin's Mulberry Tree.'

Quoth Richard to Bob, 'Let things go as they will,
Of pleasure and fun I will still have my fill;
In frolic and mirth I see nothing amiss,
And though I get tipsy, *what harm is in this?*
For e'en Solomon says, and I vow he says truth,
Rejoice, O young man, in the days of thy youth.'
'I'm glad,' answered Bob, 'you're of Solomon's creed,
But I beg, if you quote him, you'll please to [proceed;
'For God (as the wise man continues to sing)
Thy soul into judgment for all this will bring.
Thus a man may get plung'd in a woful abyss,
By choosing to say, *Pray what harm is in this?*'
'Come, come,' says gay Richard, 'don't grudge me a cup,
I'm resolv'd, while I'm able, I'll still keep it up;
Let old gray-beard's deny that in frolic there's bliss,
I'll game, love, and drink—*and what harm is in this?*'
Says Robert, 'I grant if you live for to-day,
You may game, love, and drink, and may frolic away;
But then, my dear Dick, I again must contend,
That the Wise Man has bid us—*Remember the end!*'
Says Richard, 'When sickness or peevish old age
Shall advance to dismiss me from life's merry stage;
Repentance just then, boy, may not be amiss,
But while young I'll be jolly, *what harm is in this?*'
They parted; and Richard his pastimes begun,
'Twas Richard the jovial, the soul of all fun;
Each dancing bout, drinking bout, Dick would attend
And he sung and he swore, *nor once thought of the end.*
Young Molly he courted, the pride of the plain,
He promis'd her marriage, but promis'd in vain;
She trusted his vows, but she soon was undone,
And when she lamented, he thought it good fun.
Thus scorn'd by her Richard, sad Molly run wild,
And roam'd through the woods with her destitute child;
'Till Molly and Molly's poor baby were found,
One evening, in Richard's own mill-pond both drown'd.
Then his conscience grew troubled by night and by day,
But its clamour he drown'd in more drink and more play;
Still Robert exhorted, and like a true friend
He warn'd him and pray'd him *to think on the end!*
Now disturb'd in his dreams, poor Molly each night
With her babe stood before him, how sad was the sight!
O how ghastly she look'd as she bade him attend,
And so awfully told him, '*Remember the end.*'

She talk'd of the woes and unquenchable fire
Which await the licentious, the drunkard, and liar:
How he ruin'd more maidens, she bade him [beware,
Then she wept, and she groan'd, and she vanish'd in air.
Now beggar'd by gaming, distemper'd by drink,
Death star'd in his face, yet he dar'd not to think;
Desparing of mercy, despising all truth,
He dy'd of old age in the prime of his youth.
On his tomb-stone, good Robert, these verses engrav'd,
Which he hop'd some gay fellow might read [and be saved:

THE EPITAPH.

Here lies a poor youth, who call'd drinking his bliss.
And was ruin'd by saying, *what harm is in [this?*
Let each passer by to his error attend,
And learn of poor Dick to *remember the end!*

THE CARPENTER:

Or, the Danger of Evil Company.

There was a young west countryman,
A carpentor by trade,
A skilful wheelright too was he,
And few such wagons made.
No man a tighter barn could build,
Throughout his native town;
Through many a village round was he
The best of workmen known,
His father left him what he had,
In sooth it was enough,
His shining pewter, pots of brass,
And all his household stuff.
A little cottage too he had,
For ease and comfort plann'd;
And that he might not lack for aught,
An acre of good land.
A pleasant orchard too there was
Before his cottage door;
Of cider and of corn likewise,
He had a little store.
Active and healthy, stout and young
No business wanted he;
Now tell me, reader, if you can;
What man more blest could be?
To make his comfort quite complete;
He had a faithful wife;
Frugal, and neat, and good was she,
The blessing of his life.
Where is the lord, or where the squire,
Had greater cause to praise
The goodness of that bounteous hand
Which blest his prosp'rous days?
Each night when he return'd from work,
His wife so meek and mild,
His little supper gladly dress'd,
While he caress'd his child,
One blooming babe was all he had,
His only darling dear,
The object of their equal love,
The solace of their care.
O what could ruin such a life,
And spoil so fair a lot?
O what could change so kind a heart,
And ev'ry virtue blot?
With grief the cause I must relate,
The dismal cause reveal;
'Twas EVIL COMPANY and DRINK,
The source of ev'ry ill.
A cooper came to live hard by,
Who did his fancy please;
An idle rambling man was he,
Who oft had cross'd the seas,
This man could tell a merry tale,
And sing a merry song;
And those who heard him sing or talk,
Ne'er thought the ev'ning long.
But vain and vicious was the song,
And wicked was the tale;
And ev'ry pause he always fill'd,
With cider, gin, or ale.
Our carpenter delighted much
To hear the cooper talk;
And with him to the alehouse oft,
Would take his evening walk.
At first he did not care to drink,
But only lik'd the fun;
But soon he from the cooper learnt,
The same sad course to run,
He said the cooper's company
Was all for which he car'd;
But soon he drank as much as he,
To swear like him soon dar'd.
His hammer now neglected lay,
For work he little car'd;
Half finish'd wheels and broken tools,
Were strew'd about his yard.
To get him to attend his work,
No prayers could now prevail,
His hatchet and his plane forgot,
He never drove a nail.
His cheerful ev'nings now no more
With peace and plenty smil'd;
No more he sought his pleasing wife,
Nor hugg'd his smiling child.
For not his drunken nights alone,
Were with the cooper past;
His days were at the Angel spent,
And still he stay'd the last.
No handsome Sunday suit was left,
Nor decent Holland shirt;
No nose-gay mark'd the sabbath-morn;
But all was rags and dirt.
No more his church he did frequent,
A symptom ever sad:
Where once the Sunday is mispent,
The week days must be bad.
The cottage mortgag'd for its worth;
The fav'rite orchard sold;
He soon began to feel the effects
Of hunger and of cold.
The pewter dishes one by one
Were pawn'd, till none were left;
A wife and babe at home remain'd
Of ev'ry help bereft.
By chance he call'd at home one night,
And in a surley mood,
He bade his weeping wife to get
Immediately some food.
His empty cupboard well he knew
Must needs be bare of bread;
No rasher on the rack he saw,
Whence could he then be fed!
His wife* a piteous sigh did heave,

* See Berquin's Gardener.

And then before him laid,
A basket cover'd with a cloth,
But not a word she said.
Then to her husband gave a knife,
With many a silent tear,
In haste he tore the cover off,
And saw his child lie there.
'There lies thy babe,' the mother said,
'Oppress'd with famine sore'
O kill us both—'twere kinder far
We could not suffer more.
The carpenter struck to the heart,
Fell on his knees straightway,
He wrung his hands—confess'd his sins,
And did both weep and pray.
From that same hour the cooper more
He never would behold;
Nor would he to the ale house go;
Had it been pav'd with gold.
His wife forgave him all the past;
And sooth'd his sorrowing mind,
And much he griev'd that e'er he wrong'd
The worthiest of her kind.
By lab'ring hard, and working late,
By industry and pains,
His cottage was at length redeem'd,
And sav'd were all his gains.
His Sundays now at church were spent,
His home was his delight;
The following verse himself he made,
And read it ev'ry night.

The drunkard murders child and wife,
Nor matters it a pin,
Whether he stabs them with his knife,
Or starves them with his gin.

THE RIOT:

OR, HALF A LOAF IS BETTER THAN NO BREAD.

In a Dialogue between Jack Anvil and Tom Hod.

To the tune of 'A cobler there was.'

Written in ninety-five, a year of scarcity and Alarm.

TOM.

COME neighbours, no longer be patient and quiet,
Come let us go kick up a bit of a riot;
I'm hungry, my lads, but I 've little to eat,
So we 'll pull down the mills, and we 'll seize all the meat:
I 'll give you good sport, boys, as ever you saw,
So a fig for the justice, a fig for the law.
Derry Down.

Then his pitchfork Tom seiz'd—hold a moment, says Jack,
I 'll show thee thy blunder, brave boy, in a crack,
And if I don't prove we had better be still,
I 'll assist thee straightway to pull down ev'ry mill;
I 'll show thee how passion thy reason doth cheat,
Or I 'll join thee in plunder for bread and for meat. *Derry Down.*

What a whimsey to think thus our bellies to fill,
For we stop all the grinding by breaking the mill!
What a whimsey to think we shall get more to eat,
By abusing the butcher who gets us the meat!
What a whimsey to think we shall mend our spare diet,
By breeding disturbance, by murder and riot?
Derry Down.

Because I am dry, 'twould be foolish, I think,
To pull out my tap and to spill all my drink;
Because I am hungry, and want to be fed,
That is sure no wise reason for wasting my bread;
And just such wise reasons for minding their diet,
Are us'd by those blockheads who rush into riot.
Derry Down.

I would not take comfort from others' distresses,
But still I would mark how God our land blesses;
For though in old England the times are but sad,
Abroad I am told they are ten times as bad;
In the land of the Pope there is scarce any grain,
And 'tis worse still, they say, both in Holland and Spain. *Derry Down.*

Let us look to the harvest our wants to beguile,
See the lands with rich crops how they ev'ry where smile!
Meantime to assist us, by each western breeze!
Some corn is brought daily across the salt seas!
Of tea we 'll drink little, of gin none at all,
And we 'll patiently wait, and the prices will fall. *Derry Down.*

But if we 're not quiet, then let us not wonder,
If things grow much worse by our riot and plunder;
And let us remember, whenever we meet,
The more ale we drink, boys, the less we shall eat,
On those days spent in riot *no* bread you brought home,
Had you spent them in labour you must have had *some*. *Derry Down.*

A dinner of herbs, says the wise man, with quiet,
Is better than beef amid discord and riot.
If the thing could be help'd I'm a foe to all strife,
And I pray for a peace ev'ry night of my life;
But in matters of state not an inch will I budge,
Because I conceive I'm no very good judge.
Derry Down.

But though poor, I can work, my brave boy with the best,
Let the king and the parliament manage the rest;
I lament both the war and the taxes together,
Though I verily think they don't alter the weather.
The king, as I take it, with very good reason,
May prevent a bad law, but can't help a bad season. *Derry Down.*

The parliament men, although great is their power,
Yet they cannot contrive us a bit of a shower
And I never yet heard though our rulers are wise,
That they know very well how to manage the skies;
For the best of them all, as they found to their cost,
Were not able to hinder last winter's hard frost.
Derry Down.

Besides, I must share in the wants of the times,
Because I have had my full share in its crimes;
And I'm apt to believe the distress which is sent,
Is to punish and cure us of all discontent.

But harvest is coming—potatoes are come!
Our prospect clears up; ye complainers be dumb! *Derry Down.*
And though I 've no money, and though I 've no lands,
I 've a head on my shoulders, and a pair of good hands.
So I 'll work the whole day, and on Sundays I 'll seek
At church how to bear all the wants of the week.
The gentlefolks too will afford us supplies;
They 'll subscribe—and they 'll give up their puddings and pies. *Derry Down.*
Then before I 'm induc'd to take part in a riot,
I 'll ask this short question—what shall I get by it?
So I 'll e'en wait a little till cheaper the bread,
For a mittimus hangs o'er each rioter's head:
And when of two evils I 'm ask'd which is best,
I 'd rather be hungry than hang'd, I protest. *Derry Down.*
Quoth Tom, thou art right, If I rise I 'm a Turk:
So he threw down his pitchfork, and went to his work.

PATIENT JOE:

OR, THE NEW CASTLE COLLIER.

Have you heard of a collier of honest renown,
Who dwelt on the borders of Newcastle town?
His name it was Joseph—you better may know
If I tell you he always was call'd patient Joe.
Whatever betided he thought it was right,
And Providence still he kept ever in sight;
To those who love God, let things turn as they would,
He was certain that all work'd together for good.
He prais'd his Creator whatever befel;
How thankful was Joseph when matters went well!
How sincere were his carols of praise for good health,
And how grateful for any increase in his wealth!
In trouble he bow'd him to God's holy will;
How contented was Joseph when matters went ill!
When rich and when poor he alike understood,
That all things together were working for good.
If the land was afflicted with war he declar'd,
'Twas a needful correction for sins which he shar'd,
And when merciful Heaven bade slaughter to cease,
How thankful was Joe for the blessing of peace!
When taxes ran high, and provisions were dear,
Still Joseph declar'd he had nothing to fear;
It was but a trial he well understood,
From Him who made all work together for good.
Though his wife was but sickly his gettings but small,
Yet a mind so submissive prepar'd him for all;
He liv'd on his gains were they greater or less,
And the giver he ceas'd not each moment to bless.
When another child came he received him with joy,
And Providence bless'd who had sent him the boy;
But when the child died—said poor Joe I 'm content,
For God had a right to recall what he lent.

It was Joseph's ill fortune to work in a pit
With some who believ'd that profaneness was wit;
When disasters befel him much pleasure they show'd,
And laugh'd and said—Joseph, will this work for good?
But ever when these would profanely advance
That *this* happen'd by luck, and *that* happen'd by chance;
Still Joseph insisted no chance could be found,
Not a sparrow by accident falls to the ground.
Among his companions who work'd in the pit,
And made him the butt of their profligate wit,
Was idle Tim Jenkins, who drank and who gam'd,
Who mock'd at his Bible, and was not asham'd.
One day at the pit his old comrades he found,
And they chatted, preparing to go under ground,
Tim Jenkins, as usual, was turning to jest,
Joe's notion—*that all things which happen'd were best.*
As Joe on the ground had unthinkingly laid
His provision for dinner, of bacon and bread,
A dog on the watch, seiz'd the bread and the meat,
And off with his prey ran with foot-steps so fleet.
Now to see the delight that Tim Jenkins express'd!
'Is the loss of thy dinner too, Joe for the best?'
'No doubt on't,' said Joe; 'but as I must eat,
'Tis my duty to try to recover my meat.'
So saying, he follow'd the dog a long round,
While Tim, laughing and swearing, went down under ground.
Poor Joe soon return'd, though his bacon was lost,
For the dog a good dinner had made at his cost.
When Joseph came back he expected a sneer,
But the face of each collier spoke horror and fear;
What a narrow escape hast thou had, they all said,
The pit 's fall'n in, and *Tim Jenkins* is dead!
How sincere was the gratitude Joseph express'd!
How warm the compassion which glow'd in his breast!
Thus events great and small, if aright understood,
Will be found to be working together for good.
'When my meat,' Joseph cry'd 'was just now stol'n away,
And I had no prospect of eating to-day,
How could it appear to a short-sighted sinner,
That my life would be sav'd by the loss of my dinner.'

THE GIN SHOP:

OR A PEEP INTO PRISON.

Look through the land from north to south,
And look from east to west,
And see what is to Englishmen
Of life the deadliest pest.
It is not want, though that is bad,
Nor war, though that is worse
But Britons brave endure, alas!
A self-inflicted curse.
Go where you will, throughout the realm,
You'll find the reigning sin,
In cities, villages, and towns,
—The monster's name is Gin.

The prince of darkness never sent
To man a deadlier foe,
'My name is Legion,' it may say,
The source of many a wo.
Nor does the fiend alone deprive
The labourer of his wealth:
That is not all, it murders too
His honest name and health.
We say the times are grievous hard,
And hard they are, 'tis true;
But, drunkards, to your wives and babes,
They're harder made by you.
The drunkard's tax is self-impos'd,
Like every other sin;
The taxes altogether lay
No weight so great as Gin.
The state compels no man to drink,
Compels no man to game,
'Tis Gin and Gambling sink him down
To rags, and want, and shame.
The kindest husband, chang'd by Gin,
Is for a tyrant known;
The tenderest heart that nature made,
Becomes a heart of stone.
In many a house the harmless babes
Are poorly cloth'd and fed,
Because the craving Gin-shop takes
The children's daily bread.
Come, neighbour, take a walk with me,
Through many a London street,
And see the cause of penury
In hundreds we shall meet.
We shall not need to travel far—
Behold that great man's door;
He well discerns yon idle crew
From the deserving poor.
He will relieve with liberal hand,
The child of honest thrift;
But where long scores of Gin-shops stand
He will withhold his gift.
Behold that shiv'ring female there,
Who plies her woful trade!
'Tis ten to one you'll find that Gin
That hopeless wretch has made.
Look down those steps, and view below
Yon cellar under ground,
There ev'ry want and ev'ry wo
And ev'ry sin is found.
Those little wretches trembling there,
With hunger and with cold,
Were by their parents' love of Gin,
To sin and misery sold.
Blest be those friends* to human kind
Who take these wretches up,
E'er they have drunk the bitter dregs
Of their sad parents' cup.
Look through that prison's iron bars,
Look through that dismal grate,
And learn what dire misfortune brought
So terrible a fate.
The debtor and the felon too,
Though differing much in sin,
Too oft you'll find were thither brought
By all-destroying Gin.
Yet Heav'n forbid I should confound
Calamity with guilt!
Or name the debtor's lesser fault
With blood of brother spilt.
To prison dire misfortune oft
The guiltless debtor brings;
Yet oft'ner far it will be found
From Gin the misery springs.
See the pale manufacturer there,
How lank and lean he lies!
How haggard is his sickly cheek!
How dim his hollow eyes!
He plied the loom with good success,
His wages still were high,
Twice what the village lab'rer gains,
His master did supply.
No book-debts kept him from his cash,
All paid as soon as due
His wages on the Saturday
To fail he never knew.
How amply had his gains suffic'd
On wife and children spent!
But all must for his pleasures go,
All to the Gin-shop went.
See that apprentice, young in years,
But hackney'd long in sin,
What made him rob his master's till?
Alas! 'twas love of Gin.
That serving man—I knew him once,
So jaunty, spruce, and smart!
Why did he steal, then pawn the plate?
'Twas Gin ensnar'd his heart.
But hark! what dismal sound was that?
'Tis Saint Sepulchre's bell!
It tolls, alas, for human guilt,
Some malefactor's knell.
O! woful sound! O! what could cause
Such punishment and sin?
Hark! hear his words, he owns the cause—
Bad Company and Gin.
And when the future lot is fix'd
Of darkness, fire, and chains,
How can the drunkard hope to 'scape
Those everlasting pains!
For if the murd'rer 's doom'd to wo,
As Holy-Writ declares,
The drunkard with self-murderers,
That dreadful portion shares.

* The Philanthropic Society.

TALES.

THE TWO GARDENERS.

Two gardeners once beneath an oak,
Lay down to rest, when Jack thus spoke:
'You must confess dear Will that Nature
Is but a blundering kind of creature;
And I—nay, why that look of terror?
Could teach her how to mend her error.'
'Your talk,' quoth Will, 'is bold and odd,
What you call Nature, I call God.'
'Well, call him by what name you will,
Quoth Jack, 'he manages but ill;
Nay, from the very tree we 're under,
I'll prove that Providence can blunder.'
Quoth Will, 'Through thick and thin you dash.
I shudder Jack, at words so rash·

I trust to what the Scriptures tell,
He hath done always all things well.'
Quoth Jack, 'I'm lately grown a wit,
And think all good a *lucky hit*.
To Prove that Providence can err,
Not words but facts the truth aver.
To this vast oak lift up thine eyes,
Then view that acorn's paltry size;
How foolish on a tree so tall,
To place that tiny cup and ball.
Now look again, yon pompion* see,
It weighs two pounds at least, nay three;
Yet this large fruit, where is it found?
Why, meanly trailing on the ground.
Had Providence ask'd my advice,
I would have chang'd it in a trice;
I would have said at Nature's birth,
Let Acorns creep upon the earth;
But let the pompion, vast and round,
On the oak's lofty boughs be found.'
He said—and as he rashly spoke,
Lo! from the branches of the oak,
A wind, which suddenly arose,
Beat showers of acorns on his nose;
'Oh! oh:' quoth Jack, 'I'm wrong I see,
And God is wiser far than me.
For did a show'r of pompions large,
Thus on my naked face discharge,
I had been brus'd and blinded quite,
What heav'n appoints I find is right;
Whene'er I'm tempted to rebel,
I'll think how light the acorns fell;
Whereas on oaks had pompions hung,
My broken skull had stopp'd my tongue.

* A Gourd.

THE LADY AND THE PIE:

OR KNOW THYSELF.

A WORTHY squire of sober life
Had a conceited boasting wife:
Of *him* she daily made complaint,
Herself she thought a very saint.
She lov'd to load mankind with blame,
And on their errors build her fame.
Her fav'rite subject of dispute
Was Eve and the forbidden fruit.
'Had I been Eve,' she often cried,
'Man had not fall'n, nor woman died;
I still had kept the orders giv'n,
Nor for an apple lost my heav'n;
To gratify my curious mind
I ne'er had ruin'd all mankind
Nor from a vain desire to know,
Entail'd on all my race such wo.'
The squire reply'd; 'I fear 'tis true,
The same ill spirit lives in you;
Tempted alike, I dare believe,
You would have disobey'd like Eve.'
The lady storm'd, and still deny'd
Sin, curiosity, and pride.
The squire, some future day at dinner,
Resolv'd to try this boastful sinner;
He griev'd such vanity possest her,
And thus in serious terms address'd her:
'Madam, the usual splendid feast,
With which our wedding day is grac'd,
With you I must not share to-day
For business summons me away.
Of all the dainties I've prepar'd,
I beg not any may be spar'd;
Indulge in ev'ry costly dish,
Enjoy, 'tis what I really wish;
Only observe one prohibition,
Nor think it a severe condition;
On one small dish which cover'd stands,
You must not dare to lay your hands
Go—Disobey not on your life,
Or henceforth you're no more my wife.'
The treat was serv'd, the squire was gone,
The murm'ring lady din'd alone:
She saw whate'er could grace a feast,
Or charm the eye, or please the taste:
But while she rang'd from this to that,
From ven'son haunch to turtle fat;
On one small dish she chanc'd to light,
By a deep cover hid from sight:
O! here it is—yet not for me!
I must not taste, nay, dare not see;
Why place it there? or why forbid
That I so much as lift the lid?
Prohibited of this to eat,
I care not for the sumptuous treat
I wonder if 'tis fowl or fish,
To know what's there I merely wish.
I'll look—O no, I lose forever,
If I'm betray'd, my husband's favour.
I own I think it vastly hard,
Nay, tyranny, to be debarr'd.
John, you may go—the wine's decanted,
I'll ring or call you when you're wanted.
Now left alone, she waits no longer;
Temptation presses more and stronger.
'I'll peep—the harm can ne'er be much,
For though I peep, I will not touch;
Why I'm forbid to lift this cover,
One glance will tell, and then 'tis over
My husband's absent; so is John,
My peeping never can be known,'
Trembling, she yielded to her wish,
And rais'd the cover from the dish:
She starts—for lo! an open pie
From which six living sparrows fly.
She calls, she screams, with wild surprise,
'Haste, John, and catch these birds,' she cries
John hears not; but to crown her shame,
In at her call her husband came.
Sternly he frown'd as thus he spoke:
'Thus is your vow'd allegiance broke!
Self-ign'rance led you to believe
You did not share the sin of Eve
Like hers, how blest was your condition!
Like heav'ns, how small my prohibition!
Yet you, though fed with every dainty
Sat pining in the midst of plenty;
This dish, thus singled from the rest,
Of your obedience was the test;
Your mind, unbroke by self-denial,
Could not sustain this tender trial.
Humility from this be taught,
Learn candour to another's fault;
Go know, like Eve, from this sad dinner
You're both a vain a curious sinner.'

THE PLUM-CAKES:

Or, the Farmer and his Three Sons.

A FARMER, who some wealth possest,
With three fine boys was also blest;

The lads were healthy, stout and young,
And neither wanted sense nor tongue.
Tom, Will, and Jack, like other boys,
Lov'd tops and marbles, sport and toys.
The father scouted that false plan,
That money only makes the man;
But, to the best of his discerning,
Was bent on giving them good learning;
He was a man of observation,
No scholar, yet had penetration;
So with due care, a school he sought,
Where his young sons might well be taught.
Quoth he, 'I know not which rehearses
Most properly his themes or verses;
Yet I can do a father's part,
And school the temper, mind, and heart;
The natural bent of each I'll know,
And trifles best that bent may show.'
'Twas just before the closing year,
When Christmas holidays were near,
The farmer call'd to see his boys,
And ask how each his time employs.
Quoth Will, 'There's father, boys, without,
He's brought us something good, no doubt.'
The father sees their merry faces,
With joy beholds them, and embraces.
'Come, boys, of home you'll have your fill.'
'Yes, Christmas now is near,' says Will;
''Tis just twelve days—these notches see,
My notches with the days agree.'
'Well,' said the sire, 'again I'll come,
And gladly fetch my brave boys home!
You two the dappled mare shall ride,
Jack mount the pony by my side;
Meantime, my lads, I've brought you here
No small provision of good cheer.'
Then from his pocket straight he takes,
A vast profusion of plum-cakes;
He counts them out, a plenteous store,
No boy shall have or less or more;
Twelve cakes he gives to each dear son,
When each expected only one;
And then, with many a kind expression,
He leaves them to their own discretion;
Resolv'd to mark the use each made
Of what he to their hands convey'd.
The twelve days past, he comes once more,
And brings the horses to the door
The boys with rapture see appear
The poney and the dappled mare;
Each moment now an hour they count,
And crack their whips and long to mount.
As with the boys his ride he takes,
He asks the history of the cakes.
Says Will, 'Dear father, life is short,
So I resolv'd to make quick sport;
The cakes were all so nice and sweet,
I thought I'd have one jolly treat;
Why should I balk, said I, my taste?
I'll make at once a hearty feast.
So snugly by myself I fed,
When every boy was gone to bed;
I gorg'd them all, both paste and plum,
And did not spare a single crumb;
Indeed they made me, to my sorrow,
As sick as death upon the morrow;
This made me mourn my rich repast,
And wish I had not fed so fast.'
Quoth Jack, 'I was not such a dunce,
To eat my quantum up at once;
And though the boys all long'd to clutch 'em
I would not let a creature touch 'em;
Nor though the whole were in my pow'r,
Would I one single cake devour;
Thanks to the use of keys and locks,
They're all now snug within my box;
The mischief is, by hoarding long,
They're grown so mouldy and so strong,
I find they won't be fit to eat,
And I have lost my father's treat.'
'Well, Tom,' the anxious parent cries,
'How did you manage?' Tom replies,
'I shun'd each wide extreme to take,
To glut my maw, or hoard my cake;
I thought each day its wants would have,
And appetite again might crave;
Twelve school-days still my notches counted
To twelve my father's cakes amounted;
So ev'ry day I took out one,
But never ate my cake alone;
With ev'ry needy boy I shar'd,
And more than half I always spar'd.
One ev'ry day, 'twixt self and friend,
Has brought my dozen to an end:
My last remaining cake to-day
I would not touch, but gave away;
A boy was sick, and scarce could eat,
To him it prov'd a welcome treat:
Jack call'd me spendthrift not to save,
Will dubb'd me fool because I gave;
But when our last day came, I smil'd,
For Will's were gone, and Jack's were spoil'd
Not hoarding much, nor eating fast,
I serv'd a needy friend at last.'
These tales the father's thoughts employ;
'By these,' said he, 'I know each boy:
Yet Jack, who hoarded what he had,
The world will call a frugal lad;
And selfish gormandizing Will
Will meet with friends and fav'rers still:
While moderate Tom, so wise and cool,
The mad and vain will deem a fool:
But I, his sober plan approve,
And Tom has gain'd his father's love.'

APPLICATION.

So when our day of life is past,
And all are fairly judg'd at last;
The miser and the sensual find
How each misused the gifts assign'd:
While he, who wisely spends and gives,
To the true ends of living lives;
'Tis self-denying moderation
Gains the Great Father's approbation.

TURN THE CARPET:
OR, THE TWO WEAVERS.

IN A DIALOGUE BETWEEN DICK AND JOHN

As at their work two weavers sat,
Beguiling time with friendly chat;
They touch'd upon the price of meat,
So high, a weaver scarce could eat.
'What with my brats and sickly wife,'
Quoth Dick, 'I'm almost tir'd of life;
So hard my work, so poor my fare,
'Tis more than mortal man can bear
'How glorious is the rich man's state!
His house so fine! his wealth so great!

Heav'n is unjust, you must agree;
Why all to him? why none to me?
'In spite of what the Scripture teaches,
In spite of all the parson preaches,
This world (indeed I 've thought so long)
Is rul'd, methinks, extremely wrong.
'Where'er I look, howe'er I range,
'Tis all confus'd, and hard, and strange;
The good are troubled and oppress'd
And all the wicked are the bless'd.'
Quoth John: 'Our ign'rance is the cause
Why thus we blame our Maker's laws;
Parts of his ways alone we know,
'Tis all that man can see below,
'See'st thou that carpet, not half done,
Which thou, dear Dick, hast well begun?
Behold the wild confusion there,
So rude the mass it makes one stare!
'A stranger, ign'rant of the trade,
Would say, no meaning's there convey'd;
For where 's the middle, where 's the border?
Thy carpet now is all disorder.'
Quoth Dick, 'My work is yet in bits,
But still in ev'ry part it fits;
Besides, you reason like a lout,
Why, man, that *carpet 's inside out.*'
Says John, 'Thou say'st the thing I mean,
And now I hope to cure thy spleen;
This world, which clouds thy soul with doubt,
Is but a carpet inside out.
'As when we view these shreds and ends,
We know not what the whole intends;
So when on earth things look but odd,
They 're working still some scheme of God.
'No plan, no pattern, can we trace,
All wants proportion, truth, and grace;
The motley mixture we deride,
Nor see the beauteous upper side.
'But when we reach that world of light,
And view those works of God aright,
Then shall we see the whole design,
And own the workman is divine.
'What now seems random strokes, will there
All order and design appear;
Then shall we praise what here we spurn'd,
For then the *carpet shall be turn'd.*'
'Thou 'rt right,' quoth Dick, 'no more I 'll
grumble
That this sad world 's so strange a jumble;
My impious doubts are put to flight,
For my own carpet sets me right.'

HYMNS.

THE TRUE HEROES:

Or, the Noble Army of Martyrs

You who love a tale of glory,
Listen to the song I sing;
Heroes of the Christian story,
Are the heroes I shall bring.
Warriors of the world, avaunt!
Other heroes me engage:
'Tis not such as you I want,
Saints and martyrs grace my page.
Warriors, who the world o'ercame
Were in brother's blood imbru'd;
While the saints of purer fame,
Greater far, themselves subdu'd.
Fearful Christian! hear with wonder,
Of the saints of whom I tell;
Some were burnt, some sawn asunder,
Some by fire or torture fell;
Some to savage beasts were hurl'd,
One escap'd the lion's den;
Was a persecuting world
Worthy of these wond'rous men?
Some in fiery furnace thrown,
Yet escap'd unsing'd their hair;
There Almighty pow'r was shown:
For the Son of God was there.
Let us crown with deathless fame
Those who scorn'd and hated fell;
Martyrs met contempt and shame,
Fearing nought but sin and hell.
How the show'r of stones descended,
Holy Stephen, on thy head!
While his tongue the truth defended,
How the glorious martyr bled!
See his fierce reviler Saul,
How he rails with impious breath!
Then observe converted Paul,
Oft in perils, oft in death.
'Twas that God, whose sov'reign pow'r,
Did the lion's fury 'swage,
Could alone, in one short hour,
Still the persecutor's rage.
E'en a woman—women hear,
Read in Maccabees the story!
Conquer'd nature, love, and fear,
To obtain a crown of glory.
Seven stout sons she saw expire,
(How the mother's soul was pain'd!)
Some by sword, and some by fire,
(How the martyr was sustain'd!)
E'en in death's acutest anguish,
Each the tyrant still defy'd;
Each she saw in torture languish,
Last of all the mother dy'd.
Martyrs who were thus arrested,
In their short but bright career,
By their blood the truth attested,
Prov'd their faith and love sincere.
Though their lot was hard and lowly,
Though they perish'd at the stake,
Now they live with Christ in glory,
Since they suffer'd for his sake.
Fierce and unbelieving foes
But their bodies could destroy;
Short though bitter were their woes
Everlasting is their joy.

A CHRISTMAS HYMN.

O how wond'rous is the story
Of our blest Redeemer's birth!
See the mighty Lord of Glory
Leave his heav'n to visit earth!
Hear with transport, ev'ry creature,
Hear the Gospel's joyful sound;

Christ appears in human nature,
In our sinful world is found;
Comes to pardon our transgression,
Like a cloud our sins to blot;
Comes to his own favour'd nation,
But his own receive him not.
If the angels who attended
To declare the Saviour's birth,
Who from heav'n with songs descended
To proclaim good will on earth:
If, in pity to our blindness,
They had brought the pardon needed,
Still Jehovah's wond'rous kindness
Had our warmest hopes exceeded:
If some prophet had been sent
With Salvation's joyful news,
Who that heard the blest event
Could their warmest love refuse?
But 'twas He to whom in Heav'n
Hallelujahs never cease:
He, the mighty God, was given,
Given to us a Prince of Peace.
None but He who did create us
Could redeem from sin and hell;
None but He could reinstate us
In the rank from which we fell.
Had he come, the glorious stranger,
Deck'd with all the world calls great;
Had he liv'd in pomp and grandeur,
Crown'd with more than royal state;
Still our tongues with praise o'erflowing,
On such boundless love would dwell;
Still our hearts, with rapture glowing,
Feel what words could never tell.
But what wonder should it raise
Thus our lowest state to borrow!
O the high mysterious ways,
God's own Son a child of sorrow!
'Twas to bring us endless pleasure,
He our suff'ring nature bore;
'Twas to give us heav'nly treasure,
He was willing to be poor.
Come, ye rich, survey the stable
Where your infant Saviour lies;
From your full o'erflowing table
Send the hungry good supplies.
Boast not your ennobled stations,
Boast not that you 're highly fed;
Jesus, hear it, all ye nations,
Had not where to lay his head.
Learn of me, thus cries the Saviour,
If my kingdom you 'd inherit;
Sinner, quit your proud behaviour,
Learn my meek and lowly spirit.
Come, ye servants, see your station,
Freed from all reproach and shame;
He who purchas'd your salvation,
Bore a servant's humble name.
Come, ye poor, some comfort gather
Faint not in the race you run,
Hard the lot your gracious Father
Gave his dear, his only Son.
Think, that if your humbler stations,
Less of worldly good bestow,
You escape those strong temptations
Which from wealth and grandeur flow.
See your Saviour is ascended!
See he looks with pity down!
Trust him all will soon be mended,
Bear his cross, you 'll share his crown.

A HYMN OF PRAISE,

FOR THE ABUNDANT HARVEST OF 1796,

After a year of scarcity.

GREAT GOD! when famine threaten'd late
To scourge our guilty land,
O did we learn from that dark fate
To dread thy mighty hand?
Did then our sins to mem'ry rise?
Or own'd we God was just?
Or rais'd we penitential cries?
Or bow'd we in the dust?
Did we forsake one evil path?
Was any sin abhor'd?
Or did we deprecate thy wrath,
And turn us to the Lord?
'Tis true we fail'd not to *repine*,
But did we too *repent?*
Or own the chastisement divine,
In awful judgment sent?
Though the bright chain of Peace he broke
And War with ruthless sword,
Unpeoples nations at a stroke,
Yet who regards the Lord?
But God, who in his strict decrees,
Remembers mercy still,
Can, in a moment, if he please,
Our hearts with comfort fill.
He mark'd our angry spirits rise,
Domestic hate increase;
And for a time withheld supplies,
To teach us love and peace.
He, when he brings his children low,
Has blessings still in store;
And when he strikes the heaviest blow,
He loves us but the more.
Now *Frost*, and *Flood*, and *Blight** no more
Our golden harvest spoil!
See what an unexampled store
Rewards the reaper's toil!
As when the promis'd harvest fail'd
In Canaan's fruitful land;
The envious Patriarchs were assail'd
By Famine's pressing hand!
The angry brothers then forgot
Each fierce and jarring feud;
United by their adverse lot,
They lov'd as brothers should.
So here, from Heav'n's correcting hand,
Though Famine fail'd to move;
Let Plenty now throughout the land,
Rekindle peace and love.
Like the rich fool, let us not say,
Soul! thou hast goods in store!
But shake the overplus away,
To feed the hungry poor.
Let rich and poor, on whom are now
Such bounteous crops bestow'd,
Raise many a pure and holy vow
Of gratitude to God!
And while his gracious name we praise,
For bread so kindly given;
Let us beseech him all our days,
To give the bread of heav'n.
In that blest pray'r our Lord did frame,
Of all our pray'rs the guide,
We ask that 'Hallow'd be *his* name,'

* These three visitations followed each other in quick succession.

And then *our* wants supplied.
For grace he bids us first implore,
Next, that we may be fed;
We say, 'Thy will be done,' before
We ask 'our daily bread.'

HERE AND THERE

OR, THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT.

Being Suitable Thoughts for a New Year.

Here bliss is short, imperfect, insincere,
But total, absolute, and perfect *there*.
Here time 's a moment, short our happiest state,
There infinite duration is our date.
Here Satan tempts, and troubles e'en the best,
There Satan's pow'r extends not to the blest.
In a weak sinful body *here* I dwell,
But *there* I drop this frail and sickly shell.
Here my best thoughts are stain'd with guilt and fear,
But love and pardon shall be perfect *there*.
Here my best duties are defil'd with sin,
There all is ease without and peace within.
Here feeble faith supplies my only light,
There faith and hope are swallow'd up in sight.
Here love of self my fairest works destroys,
There love of God shall perfect all my joys.
Here things, as in a glass, are darkly shown,
There I shall know as clearly as I 'm known,
Frail are the fairest flow'rs which bloom below,
There freshest palms on roots immortal grow.
Here wants or cares perplex my anxious mind,
But spirits *there* a calm fruition find.
Here disappointments my best schemes destroy
There those that sow'd in tears shall reap in joy
Here vanity is stamp'd on all below,
Perfection *there* on ev'ry good shall grow.
Here my fond heart is fasten'd on some friend,
Whose kindness *may*, whose life *must* have an end;
But *there* no failure can I ever prove,
God cannot disappoint, for God is love.
Here Christ for sinners suffer'd, groan'd, and bled,
But *there* he reigns the great triumphant head:
Here, mock'd and scourg'd, he wore a crown of thorns,
A crown of glory *there* his brow adorns.
Here error clouds the will, and dims the sight,
There all is knowledge, purity, and light.
Here so imperfect is this mortal state,
If blest myself I mourn some other's fate.
At ev'ry human wo I *here* repine,
The joy of ev'ry saint shall *there* be mine.
Here if I lean, the world shall pierce my heart,
But *there* that broken reed and I shall part.
Here on no promis'd good can I depend,
But *there* the rock of Ages is my friend.
Here if some sudden joy delight, inspire,
The dread to lose it damps the rising fire;
But *there* whatever good the soul employ,
The thought that 'tis *eternal* crowns the joy.

BALLADS.

THE HONEST MILLER

OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

A True Ballad

Of all the callings and the trades
Which in our land abound,
The miller's is as useful sure
As can on earth be found.
The lord or squire of high degree
Is needful to the state,
Because he lets the land he owns
In farms both small and great.
The farmer he manures the land,
Or else what corn could grow?
The ploughman cuts the furrow deep,
Ere he begins to sow.
And though no wealth he has, except
The labour of his hands;
Yet honest Industry 's as good
As houses or as lands.
The thrasher he is useful too
To all who like to eat;
Unless he winnow'd well the corn,
The chaff would spoil the wheat.
But vain the squire's and farmer's care,
And vain the thrasher's toil;
And vain would be the ploughman's pains
Who harrows up the soil;
And vain, without the miller's aid,
The sowing and the dressing;
Then sure an honest miller he
Must be a public blessing.
And such a miller now I make
The subject of my song,
Which, though it shall be very true,
Shall not be very long.
This miller lives in Glo'stershire,
I shall not tell his name;
For those who seek the praise of God,
Desire no other fame.
In last hard winter—who forgets
The frost of ninety-five?
Then was all dismal scarce, and dear,
And no poor man could thrive.
Then husbandry long time stood still,
And work was at a stand;
To make the matter worse, the mills
Were froze throughout the land.
Our miller dwelt beside a stream,
All underneath the hill;
Which flow'd amain when others froze,
Nor ever stopp'd the mill.
The clam'rous people came from far
This favour'd mill to find,
Both rich and poor our miller sought,
For none but he could grind.
His neighbours cry'd, 'Now miller seize
The time to heap up store,
Since thou of young and helpless babes
Hast got full half a score.'
For folks, when tempted to grow rich,
By means not over nice,
Oft make their numerous babes a plea
To sanctify the vice.
Our miller scorn'd such counsel base,
And when he ground the grain,

With steadfast hand refus'd to touch
Beyond his lawful gain.
'When God afflicts the land,' said he,
'Shall I afflict it more?
And watch for times of public wo
To wrong both rich and poor?
'Thankful to that Almighty Pow'r
Who makes my river flow,
I'll use the means he gives to sooth
A hungry neighbour's wo.
'My river flows when others freeze,
But 'tis at his command;
For rich and poor I'll grind alike,
No bribe shall stain my hand.'
So all the country who had corn
Here found their wants redrest;
May ev'ry village in the land
Be with such millers blest!

KING DIONYSIUS AND SQUIRE DAMOCLES;

A NEW SONG TO AN OLD STORY.

Proper to be sung at all feasts and merry meetings.

There was a heathen man, sir,
Belonging to a king;
And still it was his plan, sir,
To covet ev'ry thing.
And if you don't believe me,
I'll name him if you please,
For let me not deceive ye,
'Twas one squire Damocles,
He thought that jolly living
Must ev'ry joy afford;
His heart knew no misgiving,
While round the festive board.
He wanted to be great, sir,
And feed on fare delicious;
And have his feasts in state, sir,
Just like king Dionysius.
The king, to cure his longing,
Prepar'd a feast so fine,
That all the court were thronging
To see the courtier dine.
And there to tempt his eye, sir,
Was fish, and flesh, and fowl;
And when he was a-dry, sir,
There stood the brimming bowl.
Nor did the king forbid him
From drinking all he could,
The monarch never chid him,
But fill'd him with his food.
O then, to see the pleasure
Squire Damocles exprest!
'Twas joy beyond all measure,
Was ever man so blest?
With greedy eyes the squire
Devour'd each costly dainty;
You'd think he did aspire
To eat as much as twenty.
But just as he prepar'd, sir,
Of bliss to take his swing;
O, how the man was scar'd, sir,
By this so cruel king!
When he to eat intended,
Lo! just above his head,
He spied a sword suspended
All by a single thread.
How did it change the feasting
To wormwood and to gall,
To think, while he was tasting,
The pointed sword might fall
Then in a moment's time, sir,
He loath'd the luscious feast;
And dreaded as a crime, sir,
The brimming bowl to taste
Now, if you're for applying
The story I have told,
I think there's no denying
'Tis worth its weight in gold.
Ye gay, who view this stranger,
And pity his sad case;
And think there was great danger
In such a fearful place;
Come, let this awful truth, sir,
In all your minds be stor'd;
To each intemp'rate youth, sir,
Death is that pointed sword,
And though you see no reason
To check your mirth at all,
In some licentious season
The sword on you may fall.
So learn, while at your ease, sir
You drink down draughts delicious,
To think of Damocles, Sir,
And old king Dionysius.

THE HACKNEY COACHMAN:

OR, THE WAY TO GET A GOOD FARE.

To the tune of 'I wish I was a fisherman.'

I am a bold coachman, and drive a good hack,
With a coat of five capes that quite covers my back;
And my wife keeps a sausage-shop, not many miles
From the narrowest alley in all broad St. Giles.
Though poor, we are honest and very content;
We pay as we go, for meat, drink, and for rent;
To work all the week I am able and willing,
I never get drunk, and I waste not a shilling,
And while at a tavern my gentleman tarries,
The coachman grows richer than he whom he carries,
And I'd rather (said I) since it saves me from sin,
Be the driver without, than the toper within.
Yet though dram-shops I hate, and the dram-drinking friend,
I'm not quite so good, but I wish I may mend;
I repent of my sins, since we all are deprav'd,
For a coachman, I hold, has a soul to be sav'd.
When a riotous multitude fills up a street,
And the greater part know not, boys, wherefore they meet;
If I see there is mischief, I never go there,
Let others get tipsy so I get my fare.
Now to church, if I take some good lady to pray,
It grieves me full sore to be kept quite away;
So I step within side, though the sermon's begun,
For a slice of the service is better than none.
Then my glasses are whole, and my coach is so neat,
I am always the first to be call'd in the street;
And I'm known by the name ('tis a name rather rare)
Of the coachman that never asks more than his fare.

Though my beasts should be dull, yet I don't use them ill;
Though they stumble I swear not, nor cut them up hill,
For I firmly believe there's no charm in an oath
That can make a nag trot, when to walk he is loth.
And though I'm a coachman, I'll freely confess,
I beg of my Maker my labours to bless;
I praise Him each morning, and pray ev'ry night,
And 'tis this makes my heart feel so cheerful and light.
When I drive to a fun'ral I care not for drink,
That is not the moment to guzzle, but think;
And I wish I could add, both of coachman and master,
That both of us strove to amend a bit faster.

VILLAGE POLITICS.

ADDRESSED TO

ALL THE MECHANICS, JOURNEYMEN, AND LABOURERS, IN GREAT BRITAIN.

BY WILL CHIP, A COUNTRY CARPENTER.

[Written early in the French Revolution.]



It is a privilege to be prescribed to in things about which our minds would otherwise be tost with various apprehensions. And for pleasure, I shall profess myself so far from doating on that popular idol, Liberty, that I hardly think it possible for any kind of obedience to be more painful than an unrestrained liberty. Were there not true bounds, of magistrates, of laws, of piety, of reason in the heart, every man would have a fool, nay, a mad tyrant to his master, that would multiply him more sorrows than the briars and thorns did to Adam, when he was freed from the bliss at once, and the restraint of Paradise, and became a greater slave in the wilderness than in the enclosure.—*Dr. Hammond's Sermon.*

A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN JACK ANVIL, THE BLACKSMITH, AND TOM HOD, THE MASON.

Jack. WHAT's the matter, Tom? Why dost look so dismal!

Tom. Dismal, indeed! Well enough I may.

Jack. What! is the old mare dead? or work scarce?

Tom. No, no, work's plenty enough, if a man had but the heart to go to it.

Jack. What book art reading? Why dost look so like a hang dog?

Tom. (*Looking on his book.*) Cause enough. Why I find here that I'm very unhappy, and very miserable; which I should never have known if I had not had the good luck to meet with this book. Oh 'tis a precious book!

Jack. A good sign though; that you can't find out you're unhappy without looking into a book for it! What is the matter?

Tom. Matter? Why I want liberty.

Jack. Liberty! That's bad indeed! What! has any one fetched a warrant for thee? Come, man, cheer up, I'll be bound for thee. Thou art an honest fellow in the main, though thou dost tipple and prate a little too much at the Rose and Crown.

Tom. No, no, I want a new constitution.

Jack. Indeed! Why I thought thou hadst been a desperate healthy fellow. Send for the doctor directly.

Tom. I'm not sick; I want liberty and equality, and the rights of man.

Jack. O, now I understand thee. What! thou art a leveller and a republican, I warrant!

Tom. I'm a friend to the people. I want a reform.

Jack. Then the shortest way is to mend thy self.

Tom. But I want a *general reform.*

Jack. Then let every one mend one.

Tom. Pooh! I want freedom and happiness, the same as they have got in France.

Jack. What, Tom, we imitate them? We follow the French! Why they only began all this mischief at first in order to be just what *we* are already; and what a blessed land must this be, to be in actual possession of all they ever hoped to gain by all their hurly-burly. Imitate them indeed!—why I'd sooner go to the negroes to get learning, or to the Turks to get religion, than to the French for freedom and happiness.

Tom. What do you mean by that? ar'n't the French free?

Jack. Free, Tom! ay free with a witness. They are all so free that there's nobody safe. They make free to rob whom they will, and kill whom they will. If they don't like a man's looks, they make free to hang him without judge or jury, and the next lamp-post serves for the gallows; so then they call themselves free, be cause you see they have no law left to condemn

them, and no king to take them up and hang them for it.

Tom. Ah, but Jack, did'nt their king formerly hang people for nothing too? and besides, were they not all papists before the revolution?

Jack. Why, true enough, they had but a poor sort of religion; but bad is better than none, Tom. And so was the government bad enough too; for they could clap an innocent man into prison, and keep him there too as long as they would, and never say, with your leave or by your leave, gentlemen of the jury. But what's all that to us?

Tom. To us! Why don't many of our governors put many of our poor folks in prison against their will? What are all the jails for? Down with the jails, I say; all men should be free.

Jack. Harkee, Tom, a few rogues in prison keep the rest in order, and then honest men go about their business in safety, afraid of nobody; that's the way to be free. And let me tell thee, Tom, thou and I are tried by our peers as much as a lord is. Why the *king* can't send me to prison if I do no harm; and if I do, there's reason good why I should go there. I may go to law with sir John at the great castle yonder; and he no more dares lift his little finger against me than if I were his equal. A lord is hanged for hanging matter, as thou or I should be; and if it will be any comfort to thee, I myself remember a peer of the realm being hanged for killing his man, just the same as the man would have been for killing *him.**

Tom. A lord! Well, that is some comfort to be sure. But have you read the Rights of Man?

Jack. No, not I: I had rather by half read the *Whole Duty of Man.* I have but little time for reading, and such as I should therefore only read a bit of the best.

Tom. Don't tell me of those old-fashioned notions. Why should not we have the same fine things they have got in France? I'm for a *constitution*, and *organization*, and *equalization*, and *fraternization*.

Jack. Do be quiet. Now, Tom, only suppose this nonsensical equality was to take place; why it would not last while one could say Jack Robinson; or suppose it could—suppose in the general division, our new rulers were to give us half an acre of ground a-piece; we could to be sure raise potatoes on it for the use of our families; but as every other man would be equally busy in raising potatoes for *his* family, why then you see if thou wast to break thy spade, I, whose trade it is, should no longer be able to mend it. Neighbour Snip would have no time to make us a suit of clothes, nor the clothier to weave the cloth; for all the world would be gone a digging. And as to boots and shoes, the want of some one to make them for us, would be a still greater grievance than the tax on leather. If we should be sick, there would be no doctor's stuff for us; for doctors would be digging too. And if necessity did not compel, and if inequality subsisted, we could not get a chimney swept, or a load of coal from pit, for love or money.

* Lord Ferrers was hang'd in 1760, for killing his steward.

Tom. But still I should have no one over my head.

Jack. That's a mistake: I'm stronger than thou; and Standish, the exciseman, is a better scholar; so that we should not remain equal a minute. I should out-*fight* thee, and he'd out-*wit* thee. And if such a sturdy fellow as I am, was to come and break down thy hedge for a little firing, or take away the crop from thy ground, I'm not so sure that these new-fangled laws would see thee righted. I tell thee, Tom, we have a fine constitution already, and our forefathers thought so.

Tom. They were a pack of fools, and had never read the Rights of Man.

Jack. I'll tell thee a story. When sir John married, my lady, who is a little fantastical, and likes to do every thing like the French, begged him to pull down yonder fine old castle, and build it up in her frippery way. No, says sir John, what shall I pull down this noble building, raised by the wisdom of my brave ancestors; which outstood the civil wars, and only underwent a little needful repair at the revolution; a castle which all my neighbours come to take a pattern by—shall I pull it all down, I say, only because there may be a dark closet, or an awkward passage, or an inconvenient room or two in it? Our ancestors took *time* for what they did. They understood *foundation* work; no running up your little slight lath and plaster buildings, which are up in a day, and down in a night. My lady mumpt and grumbled; but the castle was let stand, and a glorious building it is; though there may be a trifling fault or two, and though a few decays want stopping; so now and then they mend a little thing, and they'll go on mending, I dare say, as they have leisure, to the end of the chapter, if they are let alone. But no pull-me-down works. What is it you are crying out for, Tom?

Tom. Why for a perfect government.

Jack. You might as well cry for the moon. There's nothing perfect in this world, take my word for it: though sir John says, we come nearer to it than any country in the world ever did.

Tom. I don't see why we are to work like slaves, while others roll about in their coaches, feed on the fat of the land, and do nothing.

Jack. My little maid brought home a story-book from the charity school t'other day, in which was a bit of a fable about the belly and the limbs. The hands said, I won't work any longer to feed this lazy belly, who sits in state like a lord and does nothing. Said the feet I won't walk and tire myself to carry him about; let him shift for himself; so said all the members; just as your levellers and republicans do now. And what was the consequence? Why the belly was pinched to be sure, and grew thin upon it; but the hands and the feet, and the rest of the members, suffered so much for want of their old nourishment, which the belly had been all the time administering, while they accused him of sitting in idle state, that they all fell sick, pined away, and would have died, if they had not come to their senses just in time to save their lives, as I hope all you will do.

Tom. But the times—but the taxes, Jack.

Jack. Things are dear to be sure, but riot and murder is not the way to make them cheap. And taxes are high; but I 'm told there 's a deal of old scores paying off, and paying off, by them who did not contract the debt neither, Tom. Besides things are mending, I hope; and what little is done is for us poor people; our candles are somewhat cheaper, and I dare say, if the honest gentleman who has the management of things, is not disturbed by you levellers, things will mend every day. But bear one thing in mind: the more we riot, the more we shall have to pay: the more mischief is done, the more will the repairs cost: the more time we waste in meeting to redress public wrongs, the more we shall increase our private wants. And mind too, that 'tis working, and not murmuring, which puts bread in our children's mouths, and a new coat on our backs. Mind another thing too, we have not the same ground of complaint; in France the poor paid all the taxes, as I have heard 'em say, and the quality paid nothing.

Tom. Well, I know what 's what, as well as another; and I 'm as fit to govern—

Jack. No, Tom, no. You are indeed as good as another man, seeing you have hands to work, and a soul to be saved. But are all men fit for all kind of things? Solomon says; 'How can he be wise whose talk is of oxen?' Every one in his way. I am a better judge of a horse-shoe than Sir John; but he has a deal better notion of state affairs than I; and I can no more do without his employ than he can do without my farriery. Besides, few are so poor but they may get a vote for a parliament-man; and so you see the poor have as much share in the government as they well know how to manage.

Tom. But I say all men are equal. Why should one be above another?

Jack. If that 's thy talk, Tom, thou dost quarrel with Providence, and not with government. For the woman is below her husband, and the children are below their mother, and the servant is below his master.

Tom. But the subject is not below the king: all kings are 'crown'd ruffians:' and all governments are wicked. For my part, I 'm resolv'd I 'll pay no more taxes to any of them.

Jack. Tom, Tom, if thou didst go oft'ner to church, thou wouldst know where it is said, 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's;' and also, 'Fear God, honour the king.' *Your* book tells you that we need obey no government but that of the people; and that we may fashion and alter the government according to our whimsies: but *mine* tells me, 'Let every one be subject to the higher powers, for all power is of God, the powers that be are ordained of God; whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.' Thou say'st, thou wilt pay no taxes to any of them.—Dost thou know who it was that worked a miracle, that he might have money to pay tribute with, rather than set you and me an example of disobedience to government? an example, let me tell thee, worth an hundred precepts, and of which all the wit of man can never lessen the value. Then there 's another thing worth minding, when St. Paul was giving all those directions, in the epistle to the Romans, for obedience and submission; what sort of a king now dost think they had? Dost think 'twas a *saint* which he ordered them to obey?

Tom. Why it was a kind, merciful, charitable king to be sure; one who put nobody to death or to prison.

Jack. You was never more out in your life. Our parson says he was a monster—that he robbed the rich, and murdered the poor—set fire to his own town, as fine a place as London—fiddled to the flames, and then hanged and burnt the Christians, who were all poor, as if they had burnt the town. Yet there 's not a word about rising.—Duties are fixed, Tom.—Laws are settled; a Christian can't pick and choose, whether he will obey or let it alone. But *we* have no such trials.—We have a king the very reverse.

Tom. I say we shall never be happy, till we do as the French have done.

Jack. The French and we contending for liberty, Tom, is just as if thou and I were to pretend to run a race; thou to set out from the starting-post when I am in already; thou to have all the ground to travel when I have reached the end. Why we 've got it man! we 've no race to run! we 're there already! Our constitution is no more like what the French one was, than a mug of our Taunton beer is like a platter of their soup-maigre.

Tom. I know we shall be undone, if we don't get a new *constitution*—that 's all.

Jack. And I know we shall be undone if we *do.* I don't know much about politics, but I can see by a little, what a great deal means. Now only to show thee the state of public credit, as I think Tim Standish calls it. There 's farmer Furrow, a few years ago he had an odd fifty pounds by him; so to keep it out of harm's way, he put it out to use, on government security, I think he calls it; well, t'other day he married one of his daughters, so he thought he'd give her that fifty pounds for a bit of a portion. Tom, as I 'm a living man, when he went to take it out, if his fifty pounds was not almost grown to an hundred! and would have been a full hundred, they say, by this time, if the gentlemen had been let alone.*

Tom. Well, still as the old saying is—I should like to do as they do in France.

Jack. What, shouldest like to be murdered with as little ceremony as Hackabout, the butcher, knocks down a calf? or shouldest like to get rid of thy wife for every little bit of tiff? And as for liberty of *conscience*, which they brag so much about, why they have driven away their parsons (ay, and murdered many of 'em) because they would not swear as they would have them. And then they talk of liberty of the press; why, Tom, only t'other day they hang'd a man for printing a book against this pretty government of theirs.

Tom. But you said yourself it was sad times in France, before they pull'd down the old government.

Jack. Well, and suppose the French were as much in the right as I know them to be in the wrong; what does that argue for *us*?—Because

* This was written before the war, when the funds were at the highest

my neighbour Furrow, t'other day pulled down a crazy old barn, is that a reason why I must set fire to my tight cottage?

Tom. I don't see for all that why one man is to ride in his coach and six, while another mends the highway for him.

Jack. I don't see why the man in the coach is to *drive over* the man on foot, or hurt a hair of his head, any more than you. And as to our great folks, that you levellers have such a spite against, I don't pretend to say they are a bit better than they should be; but that 's no affair of mine; let them look to that they 'll answer for that in another place. To be sure, I wish they 'd set us a better example about going to church, and those things; but still *hoarding 's* not the sin of the age; they don't lock up their *money*—away it goes, and every body's the better for it.—They do spend too much, to be sure, in feastings and fandangoes; and so far from commending them for it, if I was a parson I 'd go to work with 'em, but it should be in another kind of way; but as I am only a poor tradesman, why 'tis but bringing more grist to my mill. It all comes among the people. Their very extravagance, for which, as I said before, their parsons should be at them, is a fault by which, as poor men, we are benefitted; so you cry out just in the wrong place. Their coaches and their furniture, and their buildings, and their planting, employ a power of tradesmen and labourers. Now in this village, what should we do without the castle? Though my lady is too rantipolish, and flies about all summer to hot water and cold water, and fresh water and salt water, when she ought to stay at home with sir John: yet when she does come down, she brings such a deal of gentry that I have more horses than I can shoe, and my wife more linen than she can wash. Then all our grown children are servants in the family, and rare wages they have got. Our little boys get something every day by weeding their gardens, and the girls learn to sew and knit at Sir John's expense, who sends them all to school of a Sunday besides.

Tom. Ay, but there 's not Sir Johns in every village.

Jack. The more 's the pity. But there 's other help. 'Twas but last year you broke your leg, and was nine weeks in the Bristol Infirmary, where you was taken as much care of as a lord, and your family was maintained all the while by the parish. No poor-rates in France, Tom; and here there 's a matter of two million and a half paid for the poor every year, if 'twas but a little better managed.

Tom. Two million and a half!

Jack. Ay, indeed, Not translated into tenpences, as your French millions are, but twenty good shillings to the pound. But when this levelling comes about, there will be no infirmaries, no hospitals, no charity-schools, no Sunday-schools, where so many hundred thousand poor souls learn to read the word of God for nothing. —For who is to pay for them? *Equality* can't afford it; and those that may be willing won't be able.

Tom. But we shall be one as good as another for all that.

Jack. Ay, and bad will be the best. But we must work as we do now, and with this difference, that no one will be able to pay us. Tom! I have got the use of my limbs, of my liberty, of the laws, and of my Bible. The two first I take to be my *natural* rights; the two last my *civil* and *religious* rights: these, I take it, are the *true Rights of Man*, and all the rest is no thing but nonsense, and madness, and wickedness. My cottage is my castle; I sit down in it at night in peace and thankfulness, and 'no man maketh me afraid.' Instead of indulging discontent, because another is richer than I in this world (for envy is at the bottom of your equality works) I read my Bible, go to church, and look forward to a treasure in Heaven.

Tom. Ay, but the French have got it in *this* world.

Jack. 'Tis all a lie, Tom. Sir John's butler says his master gets letters which *say* 'tis all a lie. 'Tis all murder, and nakedness, and hunger, many of the poor soldiers fight without victuals, and march without clothes. These are your *democrats!* Tom.

Tom. What then, dost think all the men on our side wicked?

Jack. No—not so neither—If some of the leaders are knaves, more of the followers are fools. Sir John, who is wiser than I, says the whole system is the operation of fraud upon folly. They 've made fools of most of you, as I believe. I judge no man Tom; I hate no man. Even republicans and levellers, I hope, will always enjoy the protection of our laws; though I hope they will never be our law *makers*. There are many true dissenters, and there are some hollow churchmen; and a good man is a good man, whether his church has got a steeple to it or not.—The new fashion'd way of proving one's religion is to *hate* somebody. Now, though some folk pretend that a man's hating a papist, or a presbyterian, proves him to be a good *churchman*, it don't prove him to be a good *Christian*, Tom. As much as I hate republican works, I 'd scorn to *live* in a country where there was not liberty of conscience; and where every man might not worship God in his own way. Now that liberty they had not in France: the Bible was shut up in an unknown and heathenish tongue.—While here, thou and I can make as free use of ours as a bishop: can no more be sent to prison unjustly than the judge who tries us; and are as much taken care of by the laws as the parliament-man who makes them.—Then, as to your thinking that the new scheme will make you happy, look among your own set and see if any thing can be so dismal and discontented as a leveller.—Look at France. These poor French fellows used to be the merriest dogs in the world; but since equality came in, I don't believe a Frenchman has ever laughed.

Tom. What then dost thou take French *liberty* to be?

Jack. To murder more men in one night, than ever their poor king did in his whole life.

Tom. And what dost thou take a *democrat* to be?

Jack. One who lives to be governed by a thousand tyrants, and yet can't bear a king.

Tom. What is *equality?*

Jack. For every man to pull down every one that is above him: while, instead of raising those below him, to his own level, he only makes use of them as steps to raise himself to the place of those he has tumbled down.

Tom. What is the *new Rights of Man?*

Jack. Battle, murder, and sudden death.

Tom. What is it to be *an enlightened people?*

Jack. To put out the light of the Gospel, confound right and wrong, and grope about in pitch darkness.

Tom. What is *philosophy*, that Tim Standish talks so much about?

Jack. To believe that there's neither God, nor devil, nor heaven, nor hell: to dig up a wicked old fellow's* rotten bones, whose books, Sir John says, have been the ruin of thousands; and to set his figure up in a church and worship him.

Tom. And what is a *patriot* according to the new school?

Jack. A man who loves every other country better then his own, and France best of all.

Tom. And what is *Benevolence?*

Jack. Why, in the new fangled language, it means contempt of religion, aversion to justice, overturning of law, doating on all mankind in general, and hating every body in particular.

Tom. And what mean the other hard words that Tim talks about—*organization* and *function*, and *civism*, and *incivism*, and *equalization*, and *inviolability*, and *imperscriptible*, and *fraternization?*

Jack. Nonsense, gibberish, downright hocus-pocus. I know 'tis not English; sir John says 'tis not Latin; and his valet de sham says 'tis not French neither.

Tom. And yet Tim says he never shall be happy till all these fine things are brought over to England.

Jack. What! in this christian country, Tom? Why dost know they have no *Sabbath* in France? Their mob parliament meets on a Sunday to do their wicked work, as naturally as we do to go to church.† They have renounced God's word and God's day, and they don't even date in the year of our Lord. Why dost turn pale, man? And the rogues are always making such a noise, Tom, in the midst of their parliament-house, that their speaker rings a bell, like our penny-post man, because he can't keep them in order.

Tom. And dost thou believe they are as cruel as some folks pretend?

Jack. I am sure they are, and I think I know the reason. We christians set a high value on life, because we know that every fellow-creature has an immortal soul: a soul to be saved or lost, Tom—Whoever believes that, is a little cautious how he sends a soul unprepared to his grand account. But he who believes a man is no better than a dog, who make no more scruple of killing one than the other.

Tom. And dost thou think our Rights of Man will lead to all this wickedness?

Jack. As sure as eggs are eggs.

* Voltaire.

† Since this they have crammed ten days into the week, in order to throw Sunday out of it.

Tom. I begin to think we're better off as we are.

Jack. I'm sure on't. This is only a scheme to make us go back in every thing. 'Tis making ourselves poor when we are getting rich, and discontented when we are comfortable.

Tom. I begin to think I'm not so very unhappy as I had got to fancy.

Jack. Tom, I don't care for drink myself, but thou dost, and I'll argue with thee, not in the way of principle, but in thy own way; when there's all equality there will be no *superfluity;* when there's no wages there'll be no drink: and levelling will rob thee of thy ale more than the malt tax does,

Tom. But Standish says, if we had a good government, there'd be no want of any thing.

Jack. He is like many others, who take the king's money and betray him: let him give up the profits of his place before he kicks at the hand that feeds him.—Though I'm no scholar, I know that a good government is a good thing. But don't go to make me believe that *any* government can make a bad man good, or a discontented man happy.—What art musing upon, man?

Tom. Let me sum up the evidence, as they say at 'sizes—Hem! To cut every man's throat who does not think as I do, or hang him up at a lamp-post!—Pretend liberty of conscience, and then banish the parsons only for being conscientious!—Cry out liberty of the press, and hang up the first man who writes his mind!—Lose our poor laws!—Lose one's wife perhaps upon every little tiff!—March without clothes, and fight without victuals!—No trade!—No Bible! No Sabbath nor day of rest!—No safety, no comfort, no peace in this world—and no world to come!—Jack, I never knew thee tell a lie in my life.

Jack. Nor would I now, not even against the French.

Tom. And thou art very sure we are not ruined?

Jack. I'll tell thee how we are ruined. We have a king, so loving, that he would not hurt the people if he could: and so kept in, that he could not hurt the people if he would. We have as much liberty as can make us happy, and more trade and riches than allows us to be good. We have the best laws in the world, if they were more strictly enforced; and the best religion in the world if it was but better followed. While old England is safe, I'll glory in her, and pray for her, and when she is in danger. I'll fight for her, and die for her.

Tom. And so will I too, Jack, that's what I will, (*Sings*)

'*O the roast beef of old England!*'

Jack. Thou art an honest fellow, Tom.

Tom. This is Rose and Crown night, and Tim Standish is now at his mischief; but we'll go and put an end to that fellow's work, or he'll corrupt the whole club.

Jack. Come along.

Tom. No; first I'll stay to burn my book, and then I'll go and make a bonfire and—

Jack. Hold, Tom. There is but one thing worse than a bitter enemy—and that is an im-

prudent friend. If thou would'st show thy love to thy king and country, let's have no drinking, no riot, no bonfires: put in practice this text; which our parson preach'd on last Sunday, 'Study to be quiet, work with your own hands, and mind your own business.'

Tom. And so I will, Jack—Come on

BIBLE RHYMES,

ON THE NAMES OF ALL THE BOOKS OF THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT:

WITH ALLUSION TO SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL INCIDENTS AND CHARACTERS.

As a homely digger may show a man a rich mine, so whatever the Book may be which is *presented* to you, that which I *recommend* to you is a *matchless* one.

Hon. Robert Boyles's *Preface to the Style of the Holy Scriptures.*

THESE RHYMES

ARE AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS, BY ONE, WHO HAVING LONG BEEN ANXIOUS FOR THEIR HIGHEST INTERESTS, CANNOT CONSULT THEM BETTER, THAN BY EARNESTLY RECOMMENDING TO THEIR SERIOUS AND DAILY PERUSAL, THAT SACRED VOLUME, EMPHATICALLY CALLED

THE BOOK.

PREFACE.

This little piece requires some apology. It was written without the remotest intention of its ever being published. Some friends, for whose opinion the author entertains great deference, suggested that, at a time when such insidious attempts are making, by industry of impiety, to corrupt the principles, and to alienate the mind altogether from the study and belief of the Holy Scriptures, this slight publication might not be wholly useless or unseasonable.

Had health and other circumstances been favourable, many important characters, many striking facts, many engaging histories, might have been additionally introduced, and thus this slight work had been rendered less imperfect. But the writer having in an early attempt to treat on sacred subjects,* introduced many of the most interesting characters and incidents of the Old Testament, they are here frequently omitted or more slightly touched on.

With a hope to excite an increasing interest in the Bible, by inducing the readers to search it for themselves, the writer has generally forborne to make any particular reference to the specific chapter or verse to which the different passages allude. To increase their admiration of the Word of God by such research, is her fervent desire; and this more especially at a period when, by so many recent attacks, its truth is impugned, its authority denied, its doctrines vilified, and the characters it exhibits viewed with abhorrence, or treated with ridicule.

The familiar measure here adopted is very unfavourable to the subject. The author never remembers to have seen a serious poem written in it, except hymns; and even hymns, besides being short, are generally in the quatrain stanza; which, by making the rhyme alternate, gives greater room for elevation in the diction, and expansion of the thought, both of which the measure here used is calculated to cramp and contract.

This trifle, which was intended for little more than a *Catalogue Raisonne* of the *names* of the *books* of the Bible, admits of little poetical embellishment, even were the Author better qualified to bestow it. Indeed, the dignity of the Sacred Volume is so commanding, its superiority to all other compositions so decided, that it never gains any thing by human infusions; paraphrase dilutes it, amplification weakens, imitation debases, parody profanes.

Much more latitude is given in the Old than in the New Testament. The latter consists chiefly of fact and doctrine. It has less imagery; it exhibits a more explicit rule of faith; a more spiritualized code of morals; it is more specifically didactic. On this holy ground, therefore, we must tread with peculiar caution; because here every article of faith is definite; every rule of practice is established; the scheme of salvation is completed: so that all who enlarge on it must carefully avoid the awful sentence denounced on those who add to, or take from, what is written

Barley Wood, April 2, 1821.

* See Sacred Dramas, and Reflections of King Hezekiah.

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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INTRODUCTION.

Here the first history of mankind
From its first origin we find;
God is its author, truth its name,
Salvation all its end and aim:
Here we are shown "the good old way,"
First to believe, and then obey.
God's Spirit dictates; men proclaim
The doctrines as from him they came.
And not by miracles alone,
By prophecy the truth is shown.
Tho' 'tis no scheme for dry dispute,
No scene to wrangle and confute;
Not an arena for debate,
A field for harsh polemic hate;
Yet strict enquiry may be mov'd,
The more 'tis search'd the more 'tis prov'd,
It is a boon by mercy given,
That man may gain some taste of heaven;
Best medicine for the sin-sick soul,
For guilty passions best controul;
To all, its precepts are applied,
The rich man's guard, the poor man's guide;
To fill with gratitude the hearts
Where God his larger gifts imparts;
To cheer with higher hopes the poor,
To teach the suff'rer to endure;
The meek to raise, repress the bold,
To warn the young, to wean the old;
The arms its lends are faith and prayer,
Its fruits, oblivion sweet of care.
Here are the only precepts given
For peace on earth, or rest in heaven.
Sole lesson since the world began,
For fear of God and love to man:
It came with blessings in its train,
Which to recount, the attempt were vain.
It came to hinder fell despair,
The ravages of sin repair;
It came to cheer the contrite heart,
Redemption's wonders to impart;
That he who sins should sin no more;
It came—a lost world to restore.

PART THE FIRST.

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS, PSALMS, PROVERBS, AND ECCLESIASTES.

—

THE PENTATEUCH.

The first five books for author claim
Moses, and Pentateuch their name.
In Genesis, which first we call,
Is man's creation, and his fall.
But soon to Adam came the word
That rebel man should be restor'd.
Yet, tho' the gracious promise came,
The first-born bore a murderer's name.
See the whole world by flood expire;
The cities of the plain by fire!
You ask, perhaps, "Who slew all these?"
'Twas sin, the original disease!
From Adam the infection ran;
In downward course from man to man.
Tho' all who draw the vital breath
Must pay the penalty of death,
Yet one* immortal pair we see:
Pledge of *our* immortality!
Enoch, in a corrupted time,
Bequeath'd to us this truth sublime;
God's service is not merely talk,
The man of God with God must walk.
From general laws, immunity
He found, for Enoch did not die,
"God took him!" O emphatic word!
No more was needful to record.
The world grew worse as old it grew,
Sin gathering strength, grew bolder too,
Long-suffering patience now was past,
The appalling sentence comes at last;
"My Spirit shall not always strive,
No further respite will I give."
God bids a refuge straight prepare
For those his goodness meant to spare.
Bless'd Noah, and his favoured race,
Alone obtain the special grace.
A picture of *our* world remark,
In those who labour'd in the ark;
A stronger instance need we find
Of the hard heart of base mankind
Howe'er assiduously they wrought,
No builder his *own* safety sought;
A century was the task pursu'd,
Not one his *own* destruction view'd:
Oh, blind, God's menaced blow to slight.
What! perish with the ark in sight?
See God his awful threat'ning keep,
Break up the fountains of the deep;
Remove the limits long assign'd
Th' encroaching waters fast to bind!
Heaven's windows open; lo, the sky
Pours down its deluge from on high!
The floods that rise, the floods that fall,
Meet at one point and cover all:
All cry, none aid; with anguish wild
The frantic mother grasps her child.
The weak their safety seek below,
The rapid waves above them flow;
The strong attempt the mountain's steep,
The mountains are become the deep.
Half dead with famine, half with fear,
Now few, and fewer now, appear!
All strive, all sink—sink beasts and men;
Perish'd each living substance then.
Existence is extinct!—The world
Itself to dire destruction hurl'd.
Good Noah's house alone remain'd;
The waves his floating ark sustain'd.
There *is* an ark that's open still,
Where all may shelter if they will.
Awful, indeed, if Christians too
Should perish with *their* ark in view!
But if the moral plague abound,
Yet still some righteous men were found;
Righteous, not perfect, you may see
Throughout mankind's long history;
As stars in darkness seem more bright,
So these illume the moral night.
See Abraham full of faith and grace,
Sire of the patriarchal race:
To Isaac turn your wond'ring eyes,
Prefiguring the great Sacrifice!
What Abraham felt, fond parents, say,
Himself his only son must slay!
Though much he mourn'd, for much he lov'd,

* Elijah and Enoch.

His faith, his prompt obedience prov'd;
What dauntless faith those words implied,
" God will himself a lamb provide !"
Joseph, the virtuous, next behold,
Like Christ by his own brethren sold:
The pit, the prison, all unite,
To make his character more bright:
Whence came that strength which could sustain him,
From tempting pleasure's snares restrain him?
Could made the prison, pit, and court,
To him alike a safe resort?
What made him thus unyielding stand?
His God was still at his right hand!
Religion was to him a law;
He knew the Omnipresent saw:
No secrecy his soul can win,
No fancied safety tempt to sin:
Omniscience sees the skulking shame,
Darkness and light to God the same!

Now EXODUS records the story
Of Pharaoh's fall and Moses' glory.
By learning form'd, and form'd by nature,
For general, guide, and legislator;
At great Jehovah's high command,
By faith he left th' oppressor's land;
Escap'd the snares by Pharaoh spread,
The numerous phalanx forth he led.
Mark on the margin how they stand;
Behold they cross the sea by land!
God's mighty power is seen once more,
Oh, miracle! they reach the shore!
Egypt pursues, the ocean braves,
They rush between the parted waves!
Back to their course the waves retreat,
Again the refluent waters meet!
If Egypt's shrieks are mix'd with prayer,
They pray to gods who cannot hear!
See Egypt sink, ingulf'd their host,
The rider and his horse are lost!
Israel, unworthy of the boon,
Forgets the wond'rous rescue soon:
Sav'd, not converted;—discontent
Defeats the mighty blessing sent.
By miracle they still were fed,
From heaven receiv'd their daily bread;
Yet murmur'd at the bounteous hand
Which fed them in that desert land:
Yet *we*, these pilgrims while we blame,
And cast reproach on Israel's name;
To murmur, too, we sometimes dare,
Though we have bread to eat and spare!
Moses! thy parting song sublime,
Shall outlive worlds and bury time.
No hallow'd bard, whate'er his worth,
E'er pour'd more warm effusions forth!
O'er Israel's sin how does he sigh,
His God, his Rock, how glorify!
' Attend—the awful truth I sing,
Is no indifferent, no vain thing;
It is your life, your hope, your all;
God is the Lord; obey his call:
In vain for molten Gods you strive,
'Tis I that kill, that make alive!
Fountain of Jacob, just and true!
Thou wat'rest earth with heavenly dew!
From Thee descend the corn and wine,
All health, all gifts, all grace is thine!'
Then pouring the rich blessing round,
He shows them where true rest is found.
' Oh, people sav'd, adore the Lord,
Shield of thy help, celestial sword!
Approach, abide, secure from harms,
Safe in the everlasting arms!
Beneath that panoply divine,
Oh! save us, Lord, for we are thine!'

LEVITICUS the law proclaims,
And brands two* sacrilegious names.
The Gospel truth this book must own,
Anticipating Christ unknown.
Such types thro' the Old Scriptures run,
And, like the shadow, prove the sun.

NUMBERS the Hebrews' names declare,
In due arrangement, just and fair:
The nomenclature so exact,
Not deists can disprove the fact.

While DEUTERONOMY repeats
That law of which the other treats;
Enlarges on th' important theme;
With Moses' death completes the scheme.

See JOSHUA, type of Jesus, stand,
Fighting for Canaan's promis'd land!

While JUDGES learn'd their wisdom bring,
Before the Jews demand a king.

God's tender care of pious youth
Is sweetly seen in past'ral RUTH:
Here filial piety is found,
And with its promis'd blessing crown'd.

Good SAMUEL, as the Lord appoints,
The king so loudly ask'd, anoints;
With sorrow deep th' historian brings
Succession sad of Israel's KINGS;

And CHRONICLES prolongs the story,
So little to the royal glory:
Though some were faithful, just, and true,
We grieve to say they were but few
No prophet on the rolls of fame
Eclipses great ELIJAH's name:
Impell'd by faith, disdaining fear,
To kings and priests alike sincere!
The altar once on Carmel built
To God, proclaims th' apostate's guilt.
'Twas there th' illustrious Tishbite, born
On Baal to pour indignant scorn,
With keenest irony maintains
His power divine, in heaven who reigns
Contemns, as round the trench he trod,
Their talking, sleeping, journeying god!
To heaven behold him still aspire,
Then reach it in a car of fire!

EZRA deserves immortal praise,
Who sought the temple's walls to raise.

How shall I NEHEMIAH paint,
At once the courtier and the saint?

In ESTHER, Providence displays,
To us inscrutable, his ways;
Here the fair queen with modest grace
Obtains protection for her race:
The oppress'd from hence a lesson draws
Of courage in a righteous cause;
And here, the snares for virtue spread,
Return to plague the inventor's head.

* Nadab and Abihu.

Job, on his dunghill, far more great
Than when he dwelt in regal state!
He heard, before, Jehovah's grace,
But now he sees him face to face.
Meekly he bow'd before his God,
He felt the smart, but kiss'd the rod.
"In me, great God, complete thy will!
Slay me, and I will trust Thee still."

Is it a seraph strikes the strings?
Or is it royal David sings?
Thy Psalms divinely bring to view
Jesus, thy root and offspring too.
Mark, how the author's hallowed lays
Begin with prayer, and end with praise!
Commerce how sure! which, while it gives
Due payment, rich returns receives;
As tides, which from the shore recede,
Return to fill the native bed,
So praise which we to God impart,
Comes back in blessings to the heart.
Gainful return, to man when given
Such interchange 'twixt earth and heaven!
As long as inborn sin is felt,
Or penitence in tears shall melt;
As long as Satan shall molest,
Or anguish rend the human breast;
As long as prayer its voice shall raise,
Or gratitude ascend in praise,
So long God's poet shall impart
A balm to every broken heart;
So long the fainting spirit cheer,
And save the contrite from despair.
To Sion's bard it shall be given
To join the immortal choir in heaven;
And when with their's his accents float,
He shall not need to change his note.
Tho' due this tributary praise,
One sin embittered all his days.
The prudent prophet chose the veil
Of fiction for the bloody tale;
The tale enrag'd the blinded king;
"The man shall die who did this thing!"
Thou art the man!—the appalling word
Cuts deeper than a two-edged sword;
All self-deceit is put to flight,
Scar'd conscience re-assumes its right.
Awak'd, the king, in wild surprise,
Prostrate in dust and ashes lies.
The monarch rous'd himself abhorr'd,
And own'd his guilt before the Lord:
Now agoniz'd in prayer he speaks,
The multitude of mercies seeks.
His prayer, his penitence, obtain
A respite from the threaten'd pain.
Tho' God decreed he should not die,
Nor perish everlastingly,
Yet justice sought not to prevent,
Tho' he delay'd the punishment.
The dire effect of sin we see
In his degenerate family.
To him no future peace was known,
One son rebell'd against his throne;
Ungrateful friends, domestic jars,
Intestine tumults, foreign wars:
Contending brothers fiercely strive,
Dark enmity is kept alive;
Now murmurs loud, now famine great,
Now fierce convulsions shake the state;
Divided empire soon we see
Distract his near posterity.
Thus, tho' his pardon mercy seals,
Sin's temporal results he feels.
God with offence will have no part,
E'en in the man of his own heart.
All sadly serves to prove our fall
From purity original.

Taught by the wisdom from above,
See Proverbs full of truth and love.

To thee, O Solomon! belong
The graces of the mystic Song.

Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher,
Displays the powerful moral teacher.
How could'st thou, sapient king, combine
Thy faulty life, and verse divine?
Why were thy Proverbs still at strife
With thy dishonoured close of life?
Thou rear'st the Temple—oh, the sin
To quit the God who dwelt within!
Of all, O king, thy *books* have taught,
With holy wisdom richly fraught;
Still more thy large *experience* brings
The emptiness of human things.
In all thy keen and wide pursuit
Of love, power, pleasure, what the fruit?
Satiety in all we see,
In each enjoyment vanity!
Youth might be spar'd a world of woe,
The truth without the trial know,
Would they with abler hands advise,
And trust king Solomon the wise,
That the vex'd heart and sated mind
In God alone repose can find.

PART THE SECOND.

THE PROPHETS.

Thee, great Isaiah, dare I paint,
Prophet, evangelist, and saint?
So just thy strong prospective view,
'Tis prophecy and history too.
Rapt in futurity, he saw,
The Gospel supersede the law.
Prophet! in thy immortal lines,
The fulness of perfection shines;
There, present things the Spirit seals,
There, things that shall be he reveals,
Doctrine and warning, prayer and praise
Alike our admiration raise.
Amaz'd, we see the hand divine
Each thought direct, inspire each line.
Still has the seraph's burning coal
Left its deep impress on the soul;
Still shall the sacred fire survive,
Warm all who read, touch all who live!
'Twere hopeless to attempt the song,
So vast, so deep, so sweet, so strong!
Fain would I tell how Sharon's rose,
In solitary deserts blows;
Fain would I speak of Carmel's hill,
Whose trees the barren waste shall fill;
Of Lebanon's transplanted shade,
To sandy valleys how convey'd;
The noble metaphors we find
To loftiest objects there assign'd.
These splendid scenes before us bring
Th' invisible redeeming King.

In every image, every line,
Messiah! we behold Thee shine.
But who shall dare these charms to tell,
One British* bard has sung so well?
His *Christian* page shall never die,
O si,sic omnia! all reply.
Blest Prophet! who a theme could'st find
Congenial to restore thy mind!
Here we behold together brought
Splendour of diction and of thought;
In these bold images we see
Grandeur without hyperbole.
Here all God's attributes unite;
The gracious and the infinite;
Beyond imagination's dream,
Thy true, august, and holy theme.
All that the loftiest mind conceives,
All that the strongest faith believes,
All were too feeble to express
God's love, his pow'r, his holiness!
His length, and breadth, and depth, and height,
In all their wide extremes unite;
No danger of excess is here;
To sink too low is all thy fear.
To His broad eye, all nations see
Are less than nought, are vanity.
To him all Lebanon could bring
Only a worthless offering;
The waters at his bidding, stand
Within the hollow of his hand;
The mountains in his scales are weigh'd.
The hills are in his balance laid;
Measur'd by his almighty hand,
The globe 's a particle of sand!
Though with tremendous arm he come,
With power which strikes the nations dumb;
Centre and source of light and love,
In whom we are, and live, and move;'
Though not confin'd to time or place,
Not to the vast extent of space;
Objects of his paternal care,
The meanest still his mercies share;
He who in highest heaven resides,
Yet in the contrite heart abides.
Now, shepherd-like, his flock he feeds,
The tender bears, the feeble leads;
Power to the weak, but trusting saints
He gives, and might to him that faints.
The young may fail, the strong be weak,
But all who his salvation seek,
Strong in the Lord, shall be renew'd;
With new-born vigour be endu'd;
On eagles' wings sublimely soar,
To fear, and faint, and sin no more.†

Hear JEREMIAH's plaintive song
Pour its full tide of grief along!
By predisposing grace ordain'd,
The prophet's functions he sustain'd;
By his predicting voice reveal'd,
Thy doom, O Babylon, is seal'd!
On Judah 'twas his fate to see
Accomplish'd his own prophecy.
In what pathetic strains he show'd
Their miseries from their vices flow'd!
The *form* of goodness they defend,
But hate its *power* and miss its *end*,
For lying vanities abhorr'd,

* See Pope's exquisite poem of "the Messiah."
† Isaiah chap. xl.

They plead 'the Temple of the Lord;'
'The Temple of the Lord are these!'
Their varnish'd falsehoods more displease;
As if the edifice alone
Their practis'd evils could atone.
The Temple is beyond dispute:
A means, but not a substitute:
A fair profession may be found,
With lives unholy, hearts unsound.

No reigning vice he left untold,
Expostulation sad, yet bold,
Lays bare the sins they sought to hide,
Vain boasting, arrogance, and pride:
Reproves alike both age and youth;
Neither is valiant for the truth.
Wisdom, or wealth, or power, or might,
Alone, as rightly us'd, is right.
All glorying is by Heaven abhorr'd,
Save that which glories in the Lord.

Sublimely sad his woes impart
Their LAMENTATIONS to the heart.
Pity and woe his bosom share,
Anger and fondness, grief and prayer.
Fountains of tears could scarce express
His sorrows' and his love's excess.

EZEKIEL comes in awful state,
His vision mystically great!
The Prophet, see, his watch-tower keep,
The shepherd blame, console the sheep.

When Babylon's imperial lord
Crush'd Judah by his conqu'ring sword,
DANIEL, erect, of noble mind,
With three believing brothers join'd,
Captives among the Jews were brought,
And in the royal palace taught;
Chaldea's learning they acquir'd,
The king the ingenious youths admir'd;
At dainty tables gave them meat,
Himself ordain'd the plenteous treat.
The tempting cates he bade provide,
The daily bounties he supplied;
The wines, the royal vintage find,
Seduce not Daniel's guarded mind,
Tempt not the self-denying three
All shun the snares of luxury.
'No food, but pulse, before us bring,
No drink but the translucent spring.
The king an image vast display'd,
Enormous was the statue made;
With impious zeal his laws ordain,
All should repair to Dura's plain.
Princes and counsellors appear
Rulers of provinces be there!
At sound of sackbut, psalt'ry, flute,
All must attend: who dares dispute
The high behest, who will not own
The idol's godhead, shall be thrown
Deep in the fiery cauldron's blaze,
And burn in that capacious vase.
See Dura's plain how crowded now!
All make the prostituted vow;
All praise, all honour, all adore;
The zealous king can ask no more.
What, all? Is no exception found,
In idol worship *all* abound?
The holy brotherhood behold
In God's almighty strength how bold

Nor flute nor sackbut's sound controuls
The firm, fix'd purpose of their souls.
Their eyes, their hearts are rais'd on high,
The burning cauldron they defy,
Now hear the valiant brothers speak,
See them magnanimously meek.
No arts to soothe the haughty king,
No charge against his idol bring,
No doubts, no fears, no hesitation;
They wait no slow deliberation.
Prepar'd they stand. They scorn to swerve
'Thy gods, O king, we will not serve;
We serve Jehovah; his command
Can save his servants from thy hand,
E'en from the flames his children save,
Snatch from the fearful fiery grave.
If not, obedience is his due,
In life, in death, resolv'd and true,
No image shall our worship see,
No idol, though set up by thee.'
The king with madd'ning fury turns;
With sevenfold heat the cauldron burns;
To such intensity it grew,
The men who cast them in, it slew.
The ardent blaze unaw'd they dare,
They burn not! God's own Son is there!
Sav'd by an all controlling hand,
Unhurt, amidst the flames they stand.
Triumphant Lord! sav'd by thy power,
Nor floods shall drown, nor flames devour.
The awe-struck king the scene surveys;
Hear him the cry of rapture raise:
'They live! come forth! let my command
Be straight proclaim'd throughout the land;
Let Babylon's wide empire know
God reigns above, and rules below.
If any dare my law deny,
Or Azariah's God defy,
On dunghill heaps they shall be trod;
No God delivers like this God.'
Let youthful readers not despise
The hints which from this tale arise;
If base intemperance had possess'd
Its empire o'er the yielding breast:
Or did excess in wine obtain
A conquest o'er the youthful brain,
By these joint enemies subdu'd,
Where might have been their fortitude?
Who rules the appetite, shall find
An easier task to rule the mind.

Daniel, the statesman, saint, and sage,
Brav'd, yet unhurt, the lion's rage.
How fervently the Prophet spoke!
Warm from his lips the rapture broke:
Our right'ousness we dare not plead,
For we have none in thought or deed:
Thy oracles neglected lie;
Abus'd, thy dreadful majesty!
Our sins are great, yet greater still
Thy power to pardon, and thy will;
Oh, Lord, forgive! Oh, hear us, Lord!
For thy own sake thy help afford.
So prompt to prayer to grant thine aid,
'Tis heard almost before 'tis made.
Soon may it come, the day all hail;
When God's free Spirit shall prevail:
In full effusion, large and wide,
In ev'ry heart be multiplied.
What *must* arrive, if God be true,
Why wait for in a distant view?
Why not at once besiege the throne,
Till Heaven the supplication own?

Hosea, in each indignant line,
Denounc'd on sin the wrath divine.

Joel directs to fast and pray,
And God's displeasure turn away;
The threat'nings of the Lord he brings,
And then his goodness sweetly sings:
Why will ye perish! turn, O turn,
Before his indignation burn!
Bow down your heart, his kindness prove,
Not merely loving,—God is love;
Quick to forgive, slow to resent:
Approach his footstool and repent.
He will your contrite prayers receive,
Perhaps he may a blessing leave:
Corn, wine, and oil, again bestow,
Remove the plague, and heal the woe.

Amos exhorts, and warns, and strives
That Judah should reform their lives.
His powerful precepts never cease
To warn the rich who live at ease.
You that on downy couches lie,
Or doze on beds of ivory;
You who voluptuously consume
Your wealth, whose meal's a hecatomb;
Who at a single feast exhaust
A vineyard of uncounted cost;
Whose perfumes, floating in the air,
A Sybarite might be proud to share;
Whose festive luxuries must be crown'd
With the soft lute and viol's sound;
Are *you* the men of grief who melt
At tales of woe by brethren felt?
Ask Amos: he this truth imparts,
That pleasure hardens human hearts;
That selfish feelings most abound
Where ease and luxury are found.
How strange the paradox, yet true,
That what dissolves should harden too!

Brief Obadiah, full of grace,
Says much, though in a little space.

Jonah! How high thy honours stand
Who by one sermon rous'd a land!
At the last day how will thy fame,
Oh Nineveh, my country shame!
Jonah! thy honours sunk how low
When wrath deform'd thy sullen brow.
Better a mighty empire fall,
Than Jonah's credit sink at all!
Oh human selfishness how great,
To mourn a gourd and not a state!
The prophet here the pastor teaches
To practice what so well he preaches.

Micah, admir'd through ev'ry age,
The babe of Bethlehem crowns thy page!
With what precision dost thou trace
The then obscure, now honour'd place!

Nahum, all hail thy muse of fire,
The glories of thy dying lyre!
"The still small voice" no more is heard,
As when of old the Lord appear'd.
The whirlwind, and the driving storm,
His fearful wonders now perform;

How terrible his thunders sound!
The awe-struck sinner how confound!
No horrors can the guilty move,
Like the fierce wrath of injur'd love.
Blest Prophet! had thy strains been heard
From the proud lyre of Theban bard,
How would the wrapt enthusiast turn,
"To thoughts that breathe, and words that burn!"
But tho' not nurs'd on Pindus' mount,
Nor fed from Aganippe's fount;
Thou offerest at a loftier shrine
Than Delphi own'd, thy ode divine.
Thy muse with nobler claims shall rise:
Her inspirations from the skies;
This the chief glory of thy lays,
Thou hadst a *living* God to praise.

Though, HABAKKUK, thy name refuse
To bend obedient to the muse,
Yet thy sweet promises impart
Warm comfort to the drooping heart.
In thy fam'd prayer, sublimely sweet,
The saint and muse in concert meet.
God came from Teman; what array
Of confluent glories marks his way!
Brightness above, around was sent;
The pestilence before him went.
The skies with unknown splendours blaze,
Heaven shows his power, and earth his praise;
The everlasting mountains fled,
The rivers trembled in their bed;
Bow'd the perpetual hills; the deep
Through its dark caves was heard to sweep.
His arrows fly! Lord, at thy will
Th' astonish'd sun and moon stand still!
The shining of thy glitt'ring spear,
Transfix the heathen bands with fear..
One glance of thy pervading eye
Measures the earth; the nations fly
Dissolv'd and scatter'd; Cushan's tents
Burst forth in deep and loud laments.
They tremble at the distant sound,
Sudden thy troops their tents surround.
Yet tho' Chaldea's hostile band
Pour in their hordes, despoil the land;
Yet though the fig tree may be found
With neither fruit nor blossom crown'd;
The olive and the vine decay,
And flocks and herds be torn away;
My song of praise my God shall hear,
More free, more fervent, more sincere.
"Revive thy work;" tho' all should fail,
Let grace and godliness prevail.
Lord of my strength; my joy, my crown,
Thy boundless mercies let me own!
Thy great salvation sets me free,
I shall have all in having Thee.
Thou ZEPHANIAH, dost record
Boldly the terrors of the Lord!
HAGGAI the slothful Jews exhorts
To build the temple's hallow'd courts:
They, while their splendid mansions shine,
Neglect JEHOVAH's sacred shrine.

Thy visions, ZECHARIAH, stand
As beacons to a guilty land;
Tho' awfully obscure, yet true,
They teach the Briton as the Jew.
Known to the Lord, the day will come
Reversing Salem's awful doom!
Where nought was seen but waste and woe,
There shall the living waters flow;
Destructions direful work be past,
And Christ the King be crown'd at last.
Her courts, by those who long have fought
Against her, eagerly be sought:
One Lord, one God, shall reign alone,
His name, long prophesied, be ONE.
On every vessel, every breast,
One grand inscription be imprest;
And HOLINESS TO GOD be found
Within, without, above around!

Thou, MALACHI, though last not least,
Prepar'st for us the Gospel feast.

* * * * *

Yet o'er the ancient books you leave,
This truth in all your hearts receive,—
That all the saints unite with care
To prove the omnipotence of prayer.
Search thro' the annals of mankind,
One solitary instance find;
Prove that you know one prayer preferr'd
In faith by man, by God not heard;
Then boldly venture, if you dare,
No more to lift your heart in prayer.
Till then, pray on; 'twill clear your way:
Chiefly for God's own Spirit pray:
There we shall find, if there we seek,
Wealth for the poor, strength for the weak;
Soundness for sickness, life for death,
Deriv'd from this inspiring breath;
Till every nation, tongue and tribe,
The healing influence shall imbibe
Distil like genial drops of rain,
Or dews upon the tender grain:
This in the secret of the soul
Each strong temptation shall controul,
And some faint image, lost before,
Of its bright origin restore.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.
PART THE THIRD.

THE GOSPELS.

THIS dispensation, clear and bright,
Brings immortality to light;
Proclaims the rebel Man restor'd,
Th'Apostate brought to know the Lord.
Within this consecrated ground
Discrepancies are never found;
The writers vary just to prove
That not in concert do they move,
While Jesus' glory stands reveal'd,
The author's faults are not conceal'd;
No selfish arts, no private ends,
But all to one grand centre tends;
No fact disguis'd however wrong,
No truth kept back, however strong.
One sure criterion leaves no doubt,
Consistency prevails throughout:
The doctrine who shall dare disprove,
Of genuine faith which works by love?

MATTHEW and MARK divinely treat
Those truths which LUKE and JOHN repeat:
Tho' all concur in one grand scheme,
Each throws fresh light upon the theme
MATTHEW by no vain hope entic'd,

Left all he had to follow Christ;
Behold him faithfully record
The matchless Sermon of his Lord.
Here, every want its refuge seeks,
Here, every grace its nature speaks;
Each in its own appropriate place,
The blessing suited to the case.
Each gift to its own want confin'd;
Mercy the merciful shall find.
How cheering to the poor in spirit,
Promis'd a kingdom to inherit!
Told e'en on earth the meek man knows
The best enjoyments Heaven bestows;
Lovers of peace shall peace possess,
Comfort the comfortless shall bless;
That he who feels the oppressor's rod
Feels more the mercies of his God;
Proclaims, the pure in heart shall see,
In God, Essential Purity.

Mark, next among the historic saints,
The Baptist of the desert paints.
Herod the prophet gladly heard,
In many things obey'd his word.
But mark the rapid race of sin!
They fast advance who once begin.
Long train'd in vice, the tempter now
Ensnares him to a sinful vow:
Her graceful movements with his heart,
He will with half his kingdom part:
Sudden he cries, by passion driven,
"Make thy demand it shall be given."
Fearless she ask'd the Baptist's head,
The king was griev'd, the king obey'd:
O fruitless sorrow, vainly spent,
To mourn the crime he might prevent;
If sinful such a vow to make,
More sin to keep it than to break,
To death he doom'd the saint he lov'd;
Condemn'd the preacher he approv'd;
And she, whose softness charm'd before,
Herself the bleeding victim bore.
What wonder if the king, amaz'd,
Should dread in Christ that John was rais'd.

See Luke the glorious scene record,
The scene of his transfigur'd Lord!
This sight of wonder and of love
Confirms the glorious state above:
How blest the three* to whom 'twas given
To view three† witnesses from heaven!
The representatives they saw
Of Gospel, Prophecy, and Law.

Luke more Christ's miracles records,
John more preserves his gracious words;
Records for Christian consolation,
His Saviour's heavenly conversation,
Though John for ever stands approv'd
The blest disciple Jesus lov'd;
Yet all one path devoutly trod,
And follow'd their redeeming God.

In Him the wond'rous union view,
Atonement and *example* too!
His death sole means lost man to save;
His life our lives a pattern gave.
Explore the mystery as we can,
The perfect God was perfect man:
As man he felt affliction's rod,
As man he suffer'd, rose as God.
This union all his actions prove,

* Peter, James, and John.
† Jesus, Moses, and Elias.

As God, as man, he show'd his love,
As man to man in every state
Something he left to imitate.

Divine Philanthropist! to Thee
We lift the heart, and bow the knee
As man, man's sympathies he felt;
In tears of tenderness could melt;
Weep o'er the fated city's doom;
Weep, Lazarus, o'er thy honour'd tomb!
The hidden heart of man he knew;
Felt for his wants and weakness too.
The bruised reed he never broke,
His burden easy, light his yoke;
From heaven to earth his mercies reach,
Alike to save us, or to teach.
When call'd on, error to reprove,
Reproof was kindness, censure love:
A cure his ready hand applies
For blindness, or of heart, or eyes.
Tho' with a look, a touch, a word
The long-lost vision he restor'd;
A casual hint may pastors seize
For those who yet see men as trees:
Jesus watch'd o'er th' imperfect sight,
And blest the blind with *gradual* light.

His saints no vain display relate,
No miracles for pomp or state;
No artful show for private ends,
But all to use and mercy tends.
His life a constant lecture reads
For minor as for greater deeds;
Not that *his* hunger might be fed,
He multiplies the scanty bread:
The famish'd troops in order plac'd,
He ne'er forgot to bless the feast:
Though endless stores he could produce,
He sav'd the fragments for their use.

We pass each suffering, glorious scene,
The manger and the Cross between;
All 'he began to do, and teach'
We pass, till Calvary we reach.
The attempt almost too bold we deem,
And trembling touch the awful theme.
All eloquence, all power of speech,
Imagination's loftiest reach,
Fall short, and could but faintly prove
Th' incarnate God's last scene of love.
Abandon'd, none his woes partake;
One friend denies him, all forsake.

Yet tho' the sacred blood was shed,
'Captivity was captive led.'
The annals of mankind explore,
Did ever conqueror before
Make palpable to human eyes,
Achieve, such glorious victories?
Besides the triumphs of his grace,
Which only faith's purg'd eye can trace;
Marvels applied to sight and sense,
Exhibit his omnipotence.
Shrouded Divinity confest,
What prodigies the Lord attest!
Things contrary, opposing creatures
Struck at the sight, forget their natures,
The human voice is mute; the dumb
And senseless eloquent become.
Things breathless, things inanimate
Renounce, nay contradict their fate.
Things never meant to sympathise
Astonish unbelieving eyes.
The firm earth trembled at the view;

Th' indignant sun his light withdrew;
No natural cause eclips'd his face,
He would not witness man's disgrace.
Asunder torn, the rocks proclaim
Their sympathies with loud acclaim.
The yawning sepulchres unclose;
To life their sleeping tenants rose;
The Temple's vail is seen to rend,
And with it all distinctions end!
All various nature takes a part,
All, save the obdurate human heart.
The soldier, and th' expiring thief
Alone, proclaim their firm belief.
Lord, 'It is finished:' here we meet
Promise and prophecy complete.

Then come the Apostles' wond'rous facts,
Their travels, miracles, and Acts.
The Holy Spirit from above,
Given as the Messenger of Love.
The various languages once sent,
To Babel as its punishment,
Here take a diff'rent nature quite,
Not meant to scatter but unite;
That every nation here below,
In its own tongue God's word might know.
Ye, who to idols long confin'd,
Are blind in heart, and dark in mind;
Half quench'd the intellectual ray,
While man withheld the moral day;
To the strong hold, ye prisoners, turn,
Prisoners of hope! no longer mourn.
See Christ extended empire gains,
See mountains sinking into plains!
The Builders on the Corner-stone,
Cease not like Babel's—they work on,
Till Saba and Arabia bring
Due tribute to th' Eternal King;
The living Word shall life impart
Unseal the eye, and change the heart;
Till Jew and Gentile truth shall see,
Greek and Barbarian, bond and free;
Not by man's might, nor deed, nor word,
But by the Spirit of the Lord.
Hear martyr'd Stephen, as he dies,
Pray for his murd'rous enemies!
Then bring from Greek or Roman story
So pure an instance of true glory!
And *is* the furious bigot Saul
Become, indeed, the humble Paul?
Strange pow'r of all-transforming grace,
The lamb assumes the lion's place!
So blind, when persecution's rod
He held he thought 'twas serving God:
But now so meek, himself he paints
'Less than the least of all the saints!'
Stephen! thy prayer in death preferr'd
To save thy enemies, is heard;
And Paul perhaps the earliest fruit
Of the first martyr's dying suit.
Forgive the Muse if she recall
So oft to mind the sainted Paul;
We pass the awful truths he tells,
His labours, woes, and miracles;
We pass the pow'rs his cause who heard;
How Felix trembled, Festus fear'd;
Pass, how the Jewish king receiv'd
The truth, half doubted, half believ'd;
We pass the different works of grace
In Lydia, and the jailor's case;
We pass the perils Paul endur'd
From stripes; in prison how immur'd;
In nakedness and hunger groan'd;
Betray'd, thrice beaten, shipwreck'd, ston'd!
In every varying state we see
Only a change in misery.
How oft has admiration hung
On the great lyric bard, who sung
The warrior fam'd in Punic story,
Who swell'd the tide of Roman glory.
With magnanimity heroic,
He dignifies the noble Stoic,
See the illustrious captive stand,
Resolv'd unshaken, on the strand.
Imploring friends around him weep;
All mourn the hero all would keep.
E'en the stern senators in vain
The patriot would at last detain.
No blessings of domestic life,
No darling child, nor tender wife
He heeds; repels his wife's embrace,
Th' endearments of his infant race.
No sigh he heaves, he drops no tear,
Naught but his oath and country dear.
He knows the tortures which await,
Knows all the horrors of his fate;
By death in direst shapes unmov'd,
He coolly quitted all he lov'd.
Compos'd, as if hard law-suits past,
He sought a calm retreat at last;
Such calm as crowns Venafrian fields,
Such charms as cool Tarentum yields.
The great Apostle now behold,
A hero cast in Christian mould;
Though learn'd, he will not take his rule
From Doctors of the Stoic school.
Religion stops not nature's course,
But turns to other streams its force.
Forewarn'd, he knew where'er he went
'Twas prison, death, or banishment.
'Twas not a vague, uncertain fear;
God's Spirit show'd him what was near,
Show'd him the woes which must befall,
Not in one country, but in all.
Behold him now encircled stand,
Like the brave Roman on the strand:
A lovelier scene* adorns no page
Than that which now our thoughts engage.
Weeping, his Christian friends surround,
Their tender anguish knows no bound;
Their tears to him their grief impart,
'Mean you to weep and break my heart?'
Hear him with modest grace record
His toils for his forgiving Lord:
Pour out the tender love he feels,
Then to their justice he appeals.
Still to your highest interests true,
Witness, I sought not yours, but you.
This heart for you my daily care,
Is lifted up in ceaseless prayer;
These hands have oft procur'd my bread,
And labour'd that the poor be fed.
O treasure close in every breast,
Your Saviour's posthumous bequest,
If 'tis a blessing to receive,
Far more a blessing 'tis to give,
Then warns to feed the church of God,
Purchas'd by his redeeming blood.

*Acts, Chap xx.

Thrice bless'd the Pastor who, like Paul,
The past with comfort can recall;
His life and doctrine both review
To auditors who feel both true;
Fears not his conduct to declare
Holy, unblameable, sincere.
His preaching catholic; he speaks
Impartially to Jews and Greeks.
No words of doubtful disputation
Allure from his grand end—salvation;
Faith and repentance form his theme,
Compendium of the Christian scheme!
No searching truth he e'er conceal'd,
But God's whole counsel still reveal'd.
He speaks:—'The woes which must befall
My trusting soul shall ne'er appal.
If I for God my span employ;
If He my course may crown with joy;
If I may spend my painful race,
To testify redeeming grace;
No dread of death my soul shall move,
Secure in him I serve and love.'
His friends, lamenting, crowd the shore,
They part, they see his face no more:
Their sorrows and his own to cheer,
He consecrates the scene with prayer.

PART THE FOURTH.

THE EPISTLES.

NEXT come the ROMANS, here we trace
The flagrant manners of their race.
Tho' Nero then Rome's sceptre sway'd,
Yet conscientious Paul obey'd;
Fearless he taught that all should bring
Allegiance to their rightful king.
In this epistle we may find
The depths and heights of his great mind:
Here rhetoric and logic meet
The cause of faith to vindicate.
Paul, when the rich CORINTHIANS came,
Found much to praise and much to blame:
Luxurious, negligent, and proud;
No error was by him allow'd.
As Christian truth should still be told,
The righteous Paul is meekly bold;
And yet such tenderness appears,
His very frowns are mix'd with tears!
One glorious truth he here defends,
That truth on which *all* truth depends:
Labours one doctrine to maintain,
Which if not true, he preach'd in vain;
Vain to their faith, which might not trust
The resurrection of the just.
Then mounting above space of time,
He soars with energy sublime;
Exhausts on this grand contemplation
High argument, bold illustration!
Created nature see he brings,
Attested to the truth he sings:
All grain, all flesh, their tribute lend;
The diff'ring stars the truth defend:
If these proclaim God's glory true,
When the material heavens we view,
His glory sun and moon declare,
When on this doctrine brought to bear.
In vain shall death his prey devour,
'Twas sown in weakness, rais'd in power!
Nor slow the process: Heaven is nigh:
Quick, in the twinkling of an eye.
Methinks I see the mould'ring clay
Start into life, wake into day!
Dread sound! 'tis the last trumpet's voice!
Reviv'd, transported, all rejoice.
Hark! heard I not that rapturous cry,
Death's swallow'd up in victory?
Jesus—the ransom'd join to sing,
Jesus, oh, Death! extracts thy sting.
Can Paul, absorb'd in scenes so bright,
Again on earth vouchsafe to light?
To drop from his exhaustless store,
One parting, pointed moral more?
One added precept deign to press?
He can—awake to righteousness:
In God's great work still more abound,
Nor shall your labours vain be found.

The bold GALATIANS Paul reproves,
And much he blames, tho' much he loves;
Condemns the teachers whom he saw
Exchange the Gospel for the law.
To clear his doctrine from suspicion,
He vindicates his heavenly mission.

Th' EPHESIANS stand in glory bright,
On whom Paul shed the Gospel-light,
Where great Diana was ador'd,
They follow'd on to know the Lord:
This matchless letter you will find
A perfect model of its kind.
Where Anthony with Brutus fought,
There Christian Paul a refuge sought.
Yet e'en PHILIPPIANS could be found
The Saviour in his saint to wound:
A prison the reward they gave
The man who came their souls to save.
Did Paul the cruelty resent,
Or in reproach his anger vent?
No;—if the saint *exceeds* in love,
Invokes *more* favours from above:
If e'er his full o'erflowing heart
Sought *warmer* blessings to impart;
If *more* for any friends he pray'd,
For showers of mercies on their head;
It was for this distinguish'd place,
The scene of his most foul disgrace!
How does his fervent spirit burn
Their recent kindness to return!
What terms, what arguments employ,
To fill their hearts with holy joy!
What consolation from above;
What comfort from eternal love;
From God's blest Spirit drawing nigh;
Communion sweet, communion high!
Such strong persuasions must controul,
Convince the reason, melt the soul!
He urges motives as a law,
Which some would think deter not draw.
'Take as a *gift* reserv'd for you,
Power to believe and *suffer* too!'

The good COLOSSIANS now stand forth,
Excell'd by none in grace and worth,
Behold the saint his touchstone give,
To try with Christ if Christians live.
Oh, let your aspirations rise,
Nor stop at aught beneath the skies.
Your fruitless cares no more bestow
On perishable things below.
From sordid joys indignant fly;
Know, avarice is idolatry,

False worship 's not confin'd alone
To images of wood and stone;
Whate'er you grasp with eager hold,
Honours or pleasures, fame or gold;
These are your idols, these you'll find,
Possess your soul, engross your mind.
Heaven will with idols have no part:
That robs your God which steals your heart.

The THESSALONIANS next appear,
The bountiful and the sincere.
Here precept pure and doctrine sound,
In sweet accordance may be found.
Mark the triumphant Christian's voice,
'Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!'
As he would echo back to heaven,
The holy transport grace had given.

Young TIMOTHY is on record,
Who sought betimes to know the Lord.
Here true maternal love we find,
Which form'd the heart, and taught the mind.
Here may the British mother learn,
Her child's best interests to discern;
Her faithfulness to God best prove,
And best evince her Christian love.
Paul, while his pupil's good he seeks,
Thro' him to unborn pastors speaks:
'Reprove, exhort, be earnest still
Your high commission to fulfil;
Watch, labour, pray; in these consist
The works of an Evangelist.'
As Bishop, he commands again,
'Commit the trust to faithful men;'
Bids him observe, that those who preach
Need to *remind* as well as *teach*
To raise his soul to solemn thought,
God's judgment is before him brought;
When seated in tremendous state,
The blest and only Potentate,
The members of the living head
Shall meet the Judge of quick and dead,
Then Christ his faithful sons shall own,
Who bore his Cross, shall wear his Crown.

Next TITUS, youthful yet discreet,
First Bishop of the Isle of Crete.
Here prudent Paul, divines to show
They ought their people's faults to know,
Quotes their own poet, to declare
The Cretans sensual, insincere.
Such knowledge teaches to reprove
The erring, and the just to love.
Now in the gentle tone of friend
See him to private life descend;
The sober duties to impart,
Which grace the life, and mend the heart.
Shows on what consecrated ground
Domestic happiness is found;
Warns the fair convert not to roam:
The truest joys are found at home;
'Tis there the chaste obedient mind
Will life's best charm confer, and find.

Follows PHILEMON, who forgave,
Yea, honour'd, his converted slave.

Paul to the HEBREWS writes:—O, then,
What inspiration guides his pen!
Let wits revile, let Atheists rail,
Such evidence shall never fail,

As the first pages here supply
Of Christ's unclouded Deity.
As he proceeds, to faith 'tis given
To soar on loftier wing to heaven.
See here the doctrine prov'd by facts,
Belief exhibited in acts.
See conquering Faith's heroic hand
Church-militant in order stand!
The Red-Sea passengers we view,
Jephtha and Gideon, Barak too.
Had we all time, the time would fail
Of heroes to record the tale,
Whose deeds their attestation bring
That faith is no ideal thing.
Say, could ideal faith aspire
To quench the violence of fire?
To stop the famish'd lion's rage!
With dread temptations to engage;
All deaths despise, all dangers dare,
With no support, save God and prayer?
''Tis pride,' the sneering Sceptic cries,
'Rank pride, the martyr's strength supplies:
His fortitude by praise is fed,
Praise is Religion's daily bread.
The public show, the attendant crowd,
The admiration fond and loud;
The gaze, the noise his soul sustains,
Applause the opiate of his pains;
Withdraw the charm spectators bring,
And torture is no joyous thing.'
Thy triumphs, Faith, we need not take
Alone from the blest martyr's stake;
In scenes obscure, no less we see
That faith is a reality.
An evidence of things not seen,
A substance firm whereon to lean,
Go search the cottager's lone room,
The day scarce piercing thro' the gloom:
The Christian on his dying bed
Unknown, unletter'd, hardly fed;
No flatt'ring witnesses attend,
To tell how glorious was his end,
Save in the book of life, his name
Unheard, he never dreamt of fame.
No human consolation near,
No voice to soothe, no friend to cheer.
Of every earthly stay bereft,
And nothing but his SAVIOUR left.
Fast sinking to his kindred dust,
The Word of Life is still his trust.
The joy God's promises impart
Lies like a cordial at his heart;
Unshaken faith its strength supplies,
He loves, believes, adores, and dies.

The great Apostle ceases;—then
To holy JAMES resigns the pen;
James, full of faith and love, no doubt,
The practical and the devout.
Ye rich, the saint indignant cried,
Curs'd are all riches misapplied!
Abhorr'd the wealth which useless lies.
When merit claims, or hunger cries!
The wise alike with scorn behold
The hoarded as the squander'd gold.
In man opposing passions meet
The liberal feelings to defeat:
PLEASURE and AVARICE both agree
To stop the tide of charity:
Tho' each detests the other's deeds,

The same effect from both proceeds:
Curs'd is the gold, or sav'd, or spent,
Which God for mercy's portion meant:
Chemists in transmutation bold
Attempt to make base metals gold.
Let Christians then transmute their pelf
To something nobler than itself;
On heaven their rescued wealth bestow,
And send it home before they go:
HE will the blest deposit own:
Who seals the pardon, gives the crown.

PETER the bold, who perils hail'd
Who promis'd much, and much he fail'd;
Peter, the generous rash, and warm,
Who lov'd his Lord, but shrunk from harm;
Peter the coward and the brave,
Denying him he wish'd to save;
O Peter, what reproachful word,
What dagger keen, what two-edg'd sword,
Could pierce thy bosom like the last,
Last look thy Saviour on thee cast?
That speechless eloquence divine,
No pen, no pencil can define.
Peter, how bitter were thy tears!
Remorse absorb'd thy guilty fears.
Still, Peter, did thy risen Lord,
Conqueror of death, his grace afford;
Not to the men of faith approv'd,
Not to the saint whom Jesus loved.
It was to heal thy broken heart,
Comfort to anguish to impart:
Yes—'twas to Peter that by name
Alone the glorious tidings came.
Now mark the wond'rous power of grace!
His character has chang'd its face;
The noblest attitude assumes:
Who now on his own strength presumes?
Where now his fears? we only see
True Christian magnanimity.
Who now the foremost to declare
Their grand commission? who to dare
The standard of the cross to raise,
And his ador'd Redeemer praise?
Applause he scorn'd however true,
But gave the glory where 'twas due,
With what majestic grace he rose,
Fearless of all surrounding foes;
Brought the old Scriptures to apply
His argument from prophecy:
From miracles which well accord,
He prov'd that Jesus was the Lord.
When requisite in some hard case
To check deceit, unmask the base,
'Twas Peter's office: see him dare
Seize the prevaricating pair.*
One question stops the fraudful breath,
And blasts them both with instant death.
Ask you the truth he lov'd to teach,
The theme selected first to preach?
Repentance!—What he felt he taught:
A mighty change his preaching wrought
The fruits were equal to the zeal,
They best can teach who deepest feel.
Crown'd were his labours: Peter died
A martyr to the CRUCIFIED.

With love his pure EPISTLES fraught,
JOHN teaches what his gospel taught;

* Ananias and Sapphira.

He needs no argument to prove,
Save his own heart, that God is love.

JUDE, what his letter wants in length,
Redeems by energy and strength.
Confirms the truth from revelation
Of Enoch's marvellous translation.
Hear him in awful terms declare,
The mis'ries which the ungodly share!
Clouds without water, dark yet dry,
Spots in the feasts of charity;
Trees withering, destitute of fruit,
Exterminated branch and root.
Now in its pomp and dread array,
He summons to the judgment-day.
O, what conflicting trains of thought,
Has this amazing image brought!
O, what a fire this spark has kindled,
Of terror and of transport mingled!
Spirits who lost their first estate
Retaining their immortal hate.
The bold impenitent shall hear
His doom; his sentence black despair.
The hypocrite detected lie,
Naked, laid bare to every eye.
To crown the horrors which await,
All feel the justice of their fate.
Their fears their punishment foretell,
And conscience does the work of Hell.
They as the achme of their pain,
Acquit their Judge themselves arraign.
No shelter now from rocks or caves,
No refuge from the fiery waves;
What wonder, wildly if they call
The mountains on their heads to fall.
Then see the Man of Sorrows found,
The Lord of life and glory crown'd.
Jesus appears, as Enoch paints,
Surrounded by ten thousand saints.
Lo! heaven and earth their tribute bring
Of glory to the eternal king!
Angels, archangels, each degree
Of heaven's celestial hierarchy!
The noble martyr's valiant band
Before their conq'ring Captain stand!
The goodly prophets here behold
Fulfill'd the scenes they once foretold:
Their Lord encircling, here we see
The Apostles' glorious company:
Heaven kindly vails from human sight
All that dread day will bring to light.

THE REVELATION.

THE saint of Patmos last we meet,
And revelation stands complete.
In this bright vision, tho' he brings
Scenes of unutterable things;
He tempers heaven's effulgent light,
Too powerful else for mortal sight.
Partly by negatives are shown
Joys which hereafter shall be known:
Suffering, and sin, and death, are o'er,
For former things are seen no more;
No sorrow felt, and heav'd no sigh,
And tears are wip'd from every eye.
Yet not by negative alone,
Consummate glory shall be known;
Not only shall be found no night,
The LAMB himself shall be the light.

Sun, moon, and stars, shall fade away,
Lost in one cloudless, endless day;
Redemption finish'd, sin forgiven,
'Tis God's own presence makes it heaven.
Of future bliss, if such the sum,
Then come, Lord JESUS! quickly come!

SACRED DRAMAS:

CHIEFLY INTENDED FOR YOUNG PERSONS.

THE SUBJECTS TAKEN FROM THE BIBLE.

All the books of the Bible are either most admirable and exalted pieces of poetry, or the best materials in the world for it.—*Cowley.*



TO HER GRACE

THE DUTCHESS OF BEAUFORT,

THESE SACRED DRAMAS ARE, WITH THE MOST PERFECT RESPECT, INSCRIBED:

As, among the many amiable and distinguished qualities which adorn her mind, and add lustre to her rank, her excellence in the maternal character gives a peculiar propriety to her protection of this little work; written with an humble wish to promote the love of piety and virtue in young persons,

By her grace's most obedient, most obliged, and most humble servant,

HANNAH MORE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

I AM as ready as the most rigid critic to confess, that nothing can be more simple and inartificial than the plans of the following dramas. In the construction of them I have seldom ventured to introduce any person* of my own creation: still less did I imagine myself at liberty to invent circumstances. I reflected, with awe, that *the place whereon I stood was holy ground.* All the latitude I permitted myself was, to make such persons as I selected act under such circumstances as I found, and express such sentiments as, in my humble judgment, appeared not unnatural to their characters and situations. Some of the speeches are so long as to retard the action; for I rather aspired after moral instruction than the purity of dramatic composition. I am aware that it may be brought as an objection, that I have now and then made my Jewish characters speak too much like Christians, as it may be questioned whether I have not occasionally ascribed to them a degree of light and knowledge greater than they probably had the means of possessing: but I was more anxious in consulting the advantage of my youthful readers by leading them on to higher religious views, than in securing to myself the reputation of critical exactness.

It will be thought that I have chosen, perhaps, the least important passage in the eventful life of David, for the foundation of the drama which bears his name. Yet even in this his first exploit, the sacred historian represents him as exhibiting no mean lesson of modesty, humility, courage, and piety. Many will think that the introduction of Saul's daughter would have added to the effect of the piece: and I have no doubt but that it would have made the intrigue more complicated and amusing had this drama been intended for the stage. There, all that is tender, and all that is terrible in the passions, find a proper place. But I write for the young, in whom it will be always time enough to have the passions awakened; I write for a class of readers, to whom it is not easy to accommodate one's subject,† so as to be at once useful and interesting.

The amiable poet,‡ from whom I have taken my motto, after showing the superiority of the sacred over the profane histories, some instances of which I have noticed in my introduction, concludes with the following remark, which I may apply to myself with far more propriety than it was used by the author:—'I am far from assuming to myself to have fulfilled the duty of this weighty undertaking; and I shall be ambitious of no other fruit from this weak and imperfect attempt of mine, but the opening of a way to the courage and industry of some other persons, who may be better able to perform it thoroughly and successfully.'

* Never indeed, except in Daniel, and that of necessity; as the Bible furnishes no more than two persons, Daniel and Darius, and these were not sufficient to carry on the business of the piece.

† It would not be easy, nor perhaps proper, to introduce sacred tragedies on the English stage. The pious would think it profane, while the profane would think it dull. Yet the excellent Racine, in a profligate country and a voluptuous court, ventured to adapt the story of *Athalia* to the French theatre; and it remains to us a glorious monument of its author's courageous piety, while it exhibits the perfection of the dramatic art

‡ Cowley.

INTRODUCTION.

—

O for the sacred energy which struck
The harp of Jesse's son! or for a spark
Of that celestial flame which touch'd the lips
Of bless'd Isaiah:* when the Seraphim
With living fire descended, and his soul
From sin's pollution purg'd! or one faint ray,
If human things to heavenly I may join,
Of that pure spirit which inflam'd the breast
Of Milton, God's own poet! when retir'd
In fair enthusiastic vision wrapt,
The *nightly visitant* deign'd bless his couch
With inspiration, such as never flow'd
From Acidale or Aganippe's fount!
Then, when the sacred fire within him burnt,
He spake as man or angels might have spoke,
When man was pure, and angels were his guests.
It will not be.—Nor prophet's burning zeal,
Nor muse of fire, nor yet to sweep the strings
With sacred energy, to me belongs;
Nor with Miltonic hand to touch the chords
That wake to ecstacy. From me, alas!
The secret source of harmony is hid;
The magic pow'rs which catch the ravish'd soul
In melody's sweet maze, and the clear streams
Which to pure fancy's yet untasted springs
Enchanted lead. Of these I little know!
Yet, all unknowing, dare thy aid invoke,
Spirit of truth! to bless these worthless lays:
Nor impious is the hope; for thou hast said,
That none who ask in faith should ask in vain.
You I invoke not now, ye fabled Nine!
I not invoke you though you well were sought
In Greece and Latium, sought by deathless bards.
Whose syren song enchants; and shall enchant
Through time's wide circling round, tho' false their faith,
And less than human were the gods they sung.
Though false their faith they taught the best they knew;
And (blush, O Christians!) liv'd above their faith.
They would have bless'd the beam and hail'd the day
Which chas'd the moral darkness from their souls.
O! had their minds receiv'd the clearer ray
Of Revelation, they had learn'd to scorn
Their rites impure, their less than human gods,
Their wild mythology's fantastic maze.
Pure Plato! how had thy chaste spirit hail'd
A faith so fitted to thy moral sense!
What hadst thou felt to see the fair romance
Of high imagination, the bright dream
Of thy pure fancy, more than realiz'd!
Sublime enthusiast! thou hadst blest a scheme
Fair, good, and perfect. How had thy wrapt soul
Caught fire, and burnt with a diviner flame!
For e'en thy fair idea ne'er conceiv'd
Such plenitude of bliss, such boundless love,
As Deity made visible to sense.
Unhappy Brutus! philosophic mind!
Great 'midst the errors of the Stoic school!
How had thy kindling spirit joy'd to find
That thy lov'd virtue was no empty name:

* Isaiah, chap. vi.

Nor hadst thou met the vision at Philippi;
Nor hadst thou sheath'd thy bloody dagger's point
Or in the breast of Cæsar or thy own.
The pagan page how far more wise than ours!
They with the gods they worshipp'd grac'd their song:
Our song we grace with gods we disbelieve:
Retain the manners but reject the creed.
Shall fiction only raise poetic flame,
And shall no altar blaze, O Truth, to thee?
Shall falsehood only please and fable charm?
And shall eternal truth neglected lie?
Because immortal, slighted, or profan'd?
Truth has our rev'rence only, not our love;
Our praise, but not our hearts: a deity,
Confess'd, but shunn'd; acknowledged, not ador'd;
Alarm'd we dread her penetrating beams:
She comes too near us, and too brightly shines.
Why shun to make our duty our delight?
Let *pleasure* be the motive, disallow
All high incentives drawn from God's command;
Where shall we trace, through all the page profane,
A livelier pleasure and a purer source
Of innocent delight, than the fair book
Of holy truth presents? for ardent youth,
The sprightly narrative! for years mature,
The moral document, in sober robe
Of grave philosophy array'd: which all
Had heard with admiration, had embrac'd
With rapture, had the shades of Academe,
Or the learn'd Porch produc'd it:—Tomes had then
Been multiplied on tomes, to draw the veil
Of graceful allegory, to unfold
Some hidden source of beauty now not felt!
Do not the pow'rs of soul-enchanting song,
Strong imagery, bold figure, every charm
Of eastern flight sublime, apt metaphor,
And all the graces in thy lovely train,
Divine simplicity! assemble all
In Sion's songs, and bold Isaiah's strain?
Why should the classic eye delight to trace
The tale corrupted from its prime pure source;
How Pyrrha and the fam'd Thessalian king
Restor'd the ruin'd race of lost mankind:
Yet turn, incurious, from the patriarch sav'd
The rescued remnant of a delug'd world?
Why are we taught, delighted to recount
Alcides' labours, yet neglect to note
Heroic Samson 'midst a life of toil
Herculean? Pain and peril marking both,
A life eventful and disasterous death.
Can all the tales which Grecian story yields;
Can all the names the Roman page records,
Of wond'rous friendship and surpassing love
Can gallant Theseus and his brave compeer
Orestes and the partner of his toils;
Achates and his friend: Euryalus
And blooming Nisus, pleasant in their lives,
And undivided by the stroke of death;
Can each, can all, a lovelier picture yield
Of virtuous friendship: can they all present
A tenderness more touching than the love
Of Jonathan and David?—Speak, ye young!
Who, undebauched as yet by fashion's lore,
And unsophisticate, unbiass'd judge:
Say, is your quick attention more arous'd

By the red plagues which wasted smitten Thebes,
Than heav'n's avenging hand on Pharaoh's host?
Or do the vagrant Trojans, driven by fate
On adverse shores successive, yield a theme
More grateful to the eager appetite
Of young impatience, than the wand'ring tribes
The Hebrew leader through the desert led?
The beauteous maid,* (though tender is the tale;)
Whose guiltless blood on Aulis' altar stream'd,
Smites not the bosom with a softer pang
Than her in fate how sadly similar,
The Gileaditish virgin—victims both
Of vows unsanctify'd.——
Such are the lorely themes which court the bard,
Scarce yet essay'd in verse—for verse how meet!
While heav'n-descended song, forgetting oft
Her sacred dignity and high descent,
Debases her fair origin; oft spreads
Corruption's deadly bane, pollutes the heart
Of innocence, and with unhallow'd hand
Presents the poison'd chalice, to the brim
Fill'd with delicious ruin, minist'ring
The unwholesome rapture to the fever'd taste,
While its fell venom, with malignant pow'r,
Strikes at the root of Virtue, with'ring all
Her vital energy. Oh! for some balm
Of sov'reign power, to raise the drooping Muse
To all the health of virtue! to infuse
A gen'rous warmth, to rouse an holy zeal
And give her high conceptions of herself,
Her dignity, her worth, her aim, her end!
For me, eternal Spirit, let thy word
My path illume! O thou compassionate God!
Thou know'st our frame, thou know'st we are but dust;
From dust a Seraph's zeal thou wilt not seek,
Nor wilt thou ask an angel's purity.
But hear, and hearing pardon; as I strive,
Though with a feeble voice and flagging wing
A glowing heart, but pow'rless hand, to paint
The faith of favour'd man to heav'n; to sing
The ways inscrutable of heav'n to man;
May I, by thy celestial guidance led,
Fix deep in my own heart the truths I teach!
In my own life transcribe whate'er of good
To others I propose! and by thy rule
Correct th' irregular,* reform the wrong,
Exalt the low, and brighten the obscure!
Still may I note, how all th' agreeing parts
Of this consummate system join to frame
One fair, one finish'd, one harmonious whole!
Trace the close links which form the perfec chain
In beautiful connexion; mark the scale
Whose nice gradations, with progression true,
For ever rising, end in Deity!

* Iphigenia.

* What in me is dark
Illumine! What is low, raise and support!
PARADISE LOST.

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

A SACRED DRAMA.

Let me assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to man.—*Paradise Lost.*

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

HEBREW WOMEN.

JOCHEBED, mother of Moses.
MIRIAM, his sister.

EGYPTIANS.

The PRINCESS, king Pharaoh's daughter.
MELITA; and other attendants.

Scene—On the banks of the Nile.

This subject is taken from the second chapter of the book of Exodus.

PART I.

JOCHEBED, MIRIAM.

Joch. WHY was my pray'r accepted? why did heaven
In anger hear me, when I ask'd a son?
Ye dames of Egypt! ye triumphant mothers!
You no imperial tyrant marks for ruin;
You are not doom'd to see the babes you bore,
The babes you fondly nurture, bleed before you!
You taste the transport of a mother's love,
Without a mother's anguish! wretched Israel!
Can I forbear to mourn the different lot
Of thy sad daughters!—Why did God's own hand
Rescue his chosen race by Joseph's care?
Joseph! th' elected instrument of heaven,
Decreed to save illustrious Abraham's sons,
What time the famine rag'd in Canaan's land.
Israel, who then was spar'd, must perish now!
Thou great mysterious Pow'r, who hast involv'd
Thy wise decrees in darkness, to perplex
The pride of human wisdom, to confound
The daring scrutiny, and prove, the faith
Of thy presuming creatures! hear me now:
O vindicate thy honour, clear this doubt,
Teach me to trace this maze of Providence:
Why save the fathers, if the sons must perish?
Mir. Ah me, my mother! whence these floods of grief?
Joch. My son! my son! I cannot speak the rest;
Ye who have sons can only know my fondness!

Ye who have lost them, or who fear to lose,
Can only know my pangs! none else can guess them.
A mother's sorrows cannot be conceiv'd
But by a mother—would I were not one!

Mir. With earnest pray'rs thou didst request this son,
And heaven has granted him.

Joch. O sad estate
Of human wretchedness; so weak is man,
So ignorant and blind, that did not God
Sometimes withhold in mercy what we ask,
We should be ruin'd at our own request.
Too well thou know'st, my child, the stern decree
Of Egypt's cruel king, hard-hearted Pharaoh;
That every male, of Hebrew mother born,
Must die! Oh! do I live to tell it thee!
Must die a bloody death! My child, my son,
My youngest born my darling must be slain!

Mir. The helpless innocent! and must he die?

Joch. No: if a mother's tears, a mother's prayers,
A mother's fond precautions can prevail,
He shall not die. I have a thought my Miriam,
And sure the God of mercies who inspir'd,
Will bless the secret purpose of my soul,
To save his precious life.

Mir. Hop'st thou that Pharaoh—

Joch. I have no hope in Pharaoh, much in God;
Much in the ROCK of Ages.

Mir. Think, O think,
What perils thou already hast incurr'd,
And shun the greater which may yet remain,
Three months, three dangerous months thou hast preserv'd
Thy infant's life, and in thy house conceal'd him!
Should Pharaoh know!

Joch. Oh! let the tyrant know,
And feel what he inflicts! Yes, hear me, heaven!
Send thy right aiming thunderbolts—but hush,
My impious murmurs! is it not thy will;
Thou, infinite in mercy? Thou permitt'st
The seeming evil for some latent good.
Yes, I will laud thy grace, and bless thy goodness
For what I have, and not arraign thy wisdom
For what I fear to lose. O, I will bless thee
That Aaron will be spar'd; that my first born
Lives safe and undisturbed! that he was giv'n me
Before this impious persecution rag'd!

Mir. And yet who knows, but the fell tyrant's rage
May reach *his* precious life.

Joch. I fear for him.
For thee, for all. A doating parent lives
In many lives; through many a nerve she feels;
From child to child the quick affections spread,
Forever wand'ring, yet forever fix'd.
Nor does division weaken, nor the force
Of constant operation e'er exhaust
Parental love. All other passions change
With changing circumstances; rise or fall,
Dependent on their object; claim returns;
Live on reciprocation, and expire
Unfed by hope. A mother's fondness reigns
Without a rival, and without an end.

Mir. But say what heav'n inspires to save thy son?

Joch. Since the dear fatal morn which gave him birth,
I have revolv'd in my distracted mind
Each means to save his life: and many a thought
Which fondness prompted, prudence has oppos'd
As perilous and rash. With these poor hands
I've fram'd a little ark of slender reeds;
With pitch and slime I have secur'd the sides.
In this frail cradle I intend to lay
My little helpless infant, and expose him
Upon the banks of the Nile.

Mir. 'Tis full of danger.

Joch. 'Tis danger to expose, and death to keep him.

Mir. Yet, oh! reflect. Should the fierce crocodile,
The native and the tyrant of the Nile,
Seize the defenceless infant!

Joch. Oh forbear!
Spare my fond heart. Yet not the crocodile,
Nor all the deadly monsters of the deep,
To me are half so terrible as Pharaoh,
That heathen king, that royal murderer!

Mir. Should he escape, which yet I dare not hope,
Each sea-born monster, yet the winds and waves
He cannot 'scape.

Joch. Know, God is every where;
Not to one narrow, partial spot confin'd:
No, not to chosen Israel: he extends
Through all the vast infinitude of space:
At his command the furious tempests rise—
The blasting of the breath of his displeasure.
He tells the world of waters when to roar;
And, at his bidding, winds and seas are calm:
In him, not in an arm of flesh, I trust;
In him, whose promise never yet has fail'd,
I place my confidence.

Mir. What must I do?
Command thy daughter; for thy words have wak'd
An holy boldness in my youthful breast.

Joch. Go then, my Miriam, go, and take the infant.
Buried in harmless slumbers there he lies:
Let me not see him—spare my heart that pang.
Yet sure, one little look may be indulg'd,
And I may feast my fondness with his smiles,
And snatch one last, last kiss.—No more my heart;
That rapture would be fatal—I should keep him.
I could not doom to death the babe I clasp'd
Did ever mother kill her sleeping boy?
I dare not hazard it—The task be thine.
Oh! do not wake my child; remove him softly;
And gently lay him on the river's brink.

Mir. Did those magicians, whom the sons of Egypt
Consult and think all-potent, join their skill
And was it great as Egypt's sons believe;
Yet all their secret wizard arts combin'd,
To save this little ark of bulrushes,
Thus fearfully expos'd, could not effect it.
Their spells, their incantations, and dire charms
Could not preserve it.

Joch. Know this ark is charm'd

With incantations Pharaoh ne'er employ'd;
With spells, which impious Egypt never knew:
With invocations to the living God,
I twisted every slender reed together,
And with a pray'r did every ozier weave.

Mir. I go.

Joch. Yet e'er thou go'st, observe me well;
When thou hast laid him in his wat'ry bed,
O leave him not: but at a distance wait,
And mark what Heaven's high will determines for him.
Lay him among the flags on yonder beach,
Just where the royal gardens meet the Nile.
I dare not follow him, Suspicion's eye
Would note my wild demeanor! Miriam, yes,
The mother's fondness would betray the child.
Farewell! God of my fathers. Oh, protect him!

PART II.

Enter MIRIAM *after having deposited the child.*

Mir. YES, I have laid him in his wat'ry bed,
His wat'ry grave, I fear!—I tremble still;
It was a cruel task—still I must weep!
But ah, my mother! who shall sooth thy griefs!
The flags and sea-weeds will awhile sustain
Their precious load; but it must sink ere long!
Sweet babe, farewell! Yet think not I will leave thee:
No, I will watch thee till the greedy waves
Devour thy little bark: I'll sit me down,
And sing to thee, sweet babe; thou can'st not hear;
But 'twill amuse me, while I watch thy fate.

[*She sits down on a bank, and sings.*

SONG.

I.

THOU, who canst make the feeble strong,
O God of Israel, hear my song!
Not mine such notes as Egypt's daughter's raise;
'Tis thee, O God of Hosts, I strive to praise.

II.

Ye winds, the servants of the Lord,
Ye waves, obedient to his word,
Oh spare the babe committed to your trust;
And Israel shall confess the Lord is just!

III.

Though doom'd to find an early grave,
This infant, Lord, thy power can save,
And he, whose death 's decreed by Pharaoh s hand,
May rise a prophet to redeem the land.

[*She rises and looks out.*

What female form bends thitherward her steps?
Of royal port she seems; perhaps some friend,
Rais'd by the guardian care of bounteous Heaven,
To prop the falling house of Levi.—Soft!
I'll listen unperceiv'd; these trees will hide me.

[*She stands behind.*

Enter the PRINCESS OF EGYPT, *attended by a train of ladies.*

Prin. No farther, virgins, here I mean to rest.
To taste the pleasant coolness of the breeze;
Perhaps to bathe in this translucent stream.
Did not our holy law* enjoin th' ablution
Frequent and regular, it still were needful
To mitigate the fervours of our clime.
Melita, stay—the rest at distance wait.

[*They all go out, except one.*

The PRINCESS *looks out.*

Sure, or I much mistake, or I perceive
Upon the sedgy margin of the Nile
A chest; entangled in the reeds it seems:
Discern'st thou aught?

Mel. Something, but what I know not.

Prin. Go and examine what this sight may mean.

[*Exit maid.*

MIRIAM *behind.*

O blest, beyond my hopes! he is discover'd;
My brother will be sav'd!—who is the stranger?
Ah! 'tis the princess, cruel Pharaoh's daughter.
If she resemble her inhuman sire,
She must be cruel too; yet fame reports her
Most merciful and mild.—Great Lord of all,
By whose good Spirit bounteous thoughts are given
And deeds of love perform'd—be gracious now,
And touch her soul with mercy!

Re-enter MELITA.

Prin. Well, Melita!
Hast thou discover'd what the vessel is?

Mel. Oh, princess, I have seen the strangest sight!
Within the vessel lies a sleeping babe,
A fairer infant have I never seen!

Prin. Who knows but some unhappy Hebrew woman
Has thus expos'd her infant, to evade
The stern decree of my too cruel sire.
Unhappy mothers! oft my heart has bled
In secret anguish o'er your slaughter'd sons,
Powerless to save, yet hating to destroy.

Mel. Should this be so, my princess knows the danger.

Prin. No danger should deter from acts of mercy.

MIRIAM *behind.*

A thousand blessings on her princely head;

Prin. Too much the sons of Jacob have endur'd
From Royal Pharaoh's unrelenting hate;
Too much our house has crush'd their alien race.
Is 't not enough that cruel task-masters
Grind them by hard oppression? not enough
That iron bondage bows their spirits down?
Is 't not enough my sire his greatness owes,
His palaces, his fanes magnificent,
Those structures which the world with wonder views,
To much insulted Israel's patient race?
To them his growing cities owe their splendour:
Their toils fair Rameses and Pythom built;
And shall we fill the measure of our crimes,
And crown our guilt with murder? and shall I
Sanction the sin I hate? forbid it, Mercy!

* The ancient Egyptians used to wash their bodies four times every twenty-four hours

Mel. I know thy royal father fears the strength
Of this still growing race, who flourish more
The more they are oppress'd: he dreads their numbers.

Prin. Apis forbid! Pharaoh afraid of Israel!
Yet should this outcast race, this hapless people
Ere grow to such a formidable greatness,
(Which all the gods avert whom Egypt worship)
This infant's life can never serve their cause,
Nor can his single death prevent their greatness.

Mel. Trust not to that vain hope. By weakest means
And most unlikely instrument, full oft
Are great events produc'd. This rescued child
Perhaps may live to serve his upstart race
More than an host.

Prin. How ill it does beseem
Thy tender years and gentle womanhood,
To steel thy breast to Pity's sacred touch!
So weak, so unprotected is our sex,
So constantly expos'd, so very helpless,
That did not Heaven itself enjoin compassion,
Yet human policy should make us kind,
Lest in the rapid turn of Fortune's wheel,
We live to need the pity we refuse.
Yes, I will save him—Mercy, thou hast conquered!
Lead on—and from the rushes we'll remove
The feeble ark which cradles this poor babe.
[*The* PRINCESS *and her maid go out.*

MIRIAM *comes forward.*

How poor were words to speak my boundless joy!
The princess will protect him; bless her, Heaven!
[*She looks out after the princess, and describes her action.*
With what impatient steps she seeks the shore!
Now she approaches where the ark is laid!
With what compassion, with what angel sweetness,
She bends to look upon the infant's face!
She takes his little hand in hers—he wakes—
She smiles upon him—hark, alas! he cries;
Weep on, sweet babe! weep on, till thou hast touch'd
Each chord of pity, waken'd every sense
Of melting sympathy, and stolen her soul!
She takes him in her arms—O lovely princess!
How goodness heightens beauty! now she clasps him
With fondness to her heart, she gives him now
With tender caution to her damsel's arms:
She points her to the palace, and again
This way the princess bends her gracious steps;
The virgin train retire and bear the child.

Re-enter the PRINCESS.

Prin. Did ever innocence and infant beauty
Plead with such dumb but powerful eloquence?
If I, a stranger, feel these soft emotions,
What must the mother who expos'd him feel!
Go, fetch a woman of the Hebrew race,
That she may nurse the babe: and, by her garb,
Lo, such a one is here!

Mir. Princess, all hail!
Forgive the bold intrusion of thy servant,
Who stands a charm'd spectator of thy goodness.

Prin. I have redeem'd an infant from the waves,
Whom I intend to nurture as mine own.

Mir. My transports will betray me! [*aside.*
Gen'rous Princess!

Prin. Know'st thou a matron of the Hebrew race
To whom I may confide him?

Mir. Well I know
A prudent matron of the house of Levi;
Her name Jochebed, is the wife of Amram;
Of gentle manners, fam'd throughout her tribe
For soft humanity; full well I know
That she will rear him with a mother's love.
[*Aside.*] Oh truly spoke! a mother's love indeed!
To her despairing arms I mean to give
This precious trust: the nurse shall be the mother!

Prin. With speed conduct this matron to the palace.
Yes, I will raise him up to princely greatness,
And he shall be my son; I'll have him train'd
By choicest sages, in the deepest lore
Of Egypt's sapient son;—his name be *Moses*,
For I have drawn him from the perilous flood.
[*They go out. She kneels.*

Thou Great unseen! who causest gentle deeds,
And smil'st on what thou causest; thus I bless thee.
That thou did'st deign consult the tender make
Of yielding human hearts, when thou ordain'dst
Humanity a virtue! did'st not make it
A rigorous exercise to counteract
Some strong desire within; to war and fight
Against the powers of Nature; but did'st bend
The nat'ral bias of the soul to mercy:
Then mad'st that mercy duty! Gracious Power!
Mad'st the keen rapture exquisite as right;
Beyond the joys of sense; as pleasure sweet,
As reason vigorous, and as instinct strong!

PART III.

Enter JOCHEBED.

I've almost reach'd the place—with cautious steps
I must approach the spot where he is laid,
Lest from the royal gardens any 'spy me:
—Poor babe! ere this the pressing calls of hunger
Have broke thy short repose; the chilling waves,
Ere this have drench'd thy little shiv'ring limbs.
What must my babe have suffer'd!—No one sees me!
But soft, does no one listen!—Ah! how hard,
How very hard for fondness to be prudent!
Now is the moment to embrace and feed him,
[*She looks out*
Where's Miriam? she has left her little charge,
Perhaps through fear; perhaps she was detected.
How wild is thought! how terrible is conjecture!
A mother's fondness frames a thousand fears,
With thrilling nerve feels every real ill,

And shapes imagin'd miseries into being.
[*She looks towards the river.*
Ah me! where is he? soul-distracting sight!
He is not there—he 's lost, he 's gone, he 's drown'd!
Toss'd by each beating surge my infant floats.
Cold, cold, and wat'ry is thy grave, my child!
O no—I see the ark—transporting sight!
[*She goes towards it.*
I have it here—Alas, the ark is empty!
The casket's left, the precious gem is gone!
You spar'd him, pitying spirits of the deep!
But vain your mercy; some insatiate beast,
Cruel as Pharaoh, took the life you spar'd—
And I shall never, never see my boy!

Enter MIRIAM.

Joch. Come and lament with me thy brother's loss!
Mir. Come and adore with me the God of Jacob!
Joch. Miriam—the child is dead!
Mir. He lives! he lives!
Joch. Impossible—Oh, do not mock my grief!
See'st thou that empty vessel?
Mir. From that vessel
Th' Egyptian princess took him.
Joch. Pharaoh's daughter?
Then still he will be slain: a bloodier death
Will terminate his woes.
Mir. His life is safe;
For know, she means to rear him as her own.
Joch. [*Falls on her knees in rapture.*
To God, the Lord, the glory be ascrib'd!
O magnify'd forever be thy might
Who mock'st all human forethought! who o'er-rulest
The hearts of all sinners to perform thy work,
Defeating their own purpose! who canst plant
Unlook'd-for mercy in a heathen's heart,
And from the depth of evil bring forth good?
[*She rises.*
Mir. O blest event, beyond our warmest hopes!
Joch. What! shall my son be nurtur'd in a court,
In princely grandeur bred? taught every art
And ev'ry wond'rous science Egypt knows?
Yet ah! I tremble Miriam; should he learn,
With Egypt's polish'd arts her baneful faith!
O worse exchange for death! yes, should he learn
In yon proud palace to disown *His* hand
Who thus has sav'd him: should he e'er embrace
(As sure he will, if bred in Pharaoh's court)
The gross idolatries which Egypt owns,
Her graven images, her brutish gods,
Then shall I wish he had not been preserv'd
To shame his fathers and deny his faith.
Mir. Then to dispel thy fears and crown thy joy,
Hear farther wonders—Know, the gen'rous princess
To thine own care thy darling child commits.
Joch. Speak, while my joy will give me leave to listen!
Mir. By her commission'd, thou behold'st me here,
To seek a matron of the Hebrew race
To nurse him: thou, my mother, art that matron
I said I knew thee well; that thou would'st rear him,
E'en with a mother's fondness; she who bare him
(I told the princess) would not love him more.
Joch. Fountain of Mercy! whose pervading eye
Can look within and read what passes there,
Accept my thoughts for thanks! I have no words.
My soul, o'erfraught with gratitude, rejects
The aid of language—Lord! behold my heart.
Mir. Yes, thou shalt pour into his infant mind
The purest precepts of the purest faith.
Joch. O! I will fill his tender soul with virtue,
And warm his bosom with devotion's flame!
Aid me celestial Spirit! with thy grace,
And be my labours with thy influence crown'd!
Without it they were vain. Then, then, my Miriam,
When he is furnish'd 'gainst the evil day,
With God's whole armour,* girt with sacred truth,
And as a breastplate wearing righteousness,
Arm'd with the Spirit of God, the shield of faith,
And with the helmet of salvation crown'd,
Inur'd to watching and dispos'd to prayer;
Then may I send him to a dangerous court,
And safely trust him in a perilous world,
Too full of tempting snares and fond delusions!
Mir. May bounteous Heav'n thy pious cares reward!
Joch. O Amram! O my husband! when thou com'st,
Wearied at night, to rest thee from the toils
Impos'd by haughty Pharaoh, what a tale
Have I to tell thee! Yes: thy darling son
Was lost, and is restor'd; was dead, and lives!
Mir. How joyful shall we spend the live-long night
In praises to Jehovah; who thus mocks
All human foresight, and converts the means
Of seeming ruin into great deliverance!
Joch. Had not my child been doom'd to such strange perils
As a fond mother trembles to recal,
He had not been preserv'd.
Mir. And mark still farther;
Had he been sav'd by any other hand,
He had been still expos'd to equal ruin.
Joch. Then let us join to bless the hand of Heaven,
That this poor outcast of the house of Israel,
Condemn'd to die by Pharaoh, kept in secret
By my advent'rous fondness; then expos'd
E'en by that very fondness which conceal'd him,
Is now, to fill the wondrous round of mercy,
Preserv'd from perishing by Pharaoh's daughter,
Sav'd by the very hand which sought to crush him.
Wise and unsearchable are all thy ways,
Thou God of Mercies—Lead me to my child.

* Thess. chap. 5. Ephes. chap. vi.

DAVID AND GOLIATH;

A SACRED DRAMA.

O bienheureux mille fois,
L'Enfant que le Seigneur aime,
Qui de bonne heure entend sa voix,
Et que ce Dieu diagne instruire lui-meme!
Loin du monde eleve; de tous les dons des Cieur,
Il est orne des sa naissance;
Et du mechant l'abord contagieux
N'altere point son innocence.—*Athalie.*

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

SAUL, king of Israel.
ABNER, his general.
JESSE.
ELIAB, ABINADAB, DAVID, sons of Jesse.
GOLIATH, the Philistian giant.
Philistines, Israelites, &c. &c.
Chorus of Hebrew women.

The scene lies in the camp in the valley of Elah, and the adjacent plain.

The subject is taken from the seventh chapter of the First Book of Samuel.

PART I.

SCENE—A shepherd's tent on a plain.

DAVID, *under a spreading tree, plays on his harp and sings.*

I.

GREAT Lord of all things! Pow'r divine!
Breathe on this erring heart of mine
Thy grace serene and pure;
Defend my frail, my erring youth,
And teach me this important truth,
The humble are secure!

II.

Teach me to bless my lowly lot,
Confin'd to this paternal cot,
Remote from regal state!
Content to court the cooling glade,
Inhale the breeze, enjoy the shade,
And love my humble fate.

III.

No anxious vigils here I keep,
No dreams of gold distract my sleep,
Nor lead my heart astray;
Nor blasting Envy's tainted gale
Pollutes the pleasures of the vale,
To vex my harmless day.

IV.

Yon tow'r which rears its head so high,
And bids defiance to the sky,
Invites the hostile winds:
Yon branching oak extending wide,
Provokes destruction by its pride,
And courts the fall it finds.

V.

Then let me shun th' ambitious deed,
And all the dang'rous paths which lead
To honours falsely won;
Lord! in thy sure protection blest,
Submissive will I ever rest,
And may thy will be done!

[*He lays down his harp and rises.*

David. Methinks this shepherd's life were dull and tasteless
Without the charm of soothing song or harp:
With it, not undelightful is the haunt
Of wood, or lonely grove, or russet plain,
Made vocal by the Muse. With this lov'd harp,
This daily solace of my cares, I sooth'd
The melancholy monarch, when he lay
Smit by the chill and spirit-quenching hand
Of black despair. God of my fathers, hear me
Here I devote my harp, my verse, myself,
To thy best service! gladly to proclaim
Glory to God on high, on earth good-will
To man; to pour my grateful soul before thee;
To sing thy pow'r, thy wisdom, and thy love,
And ev'ry gracious attribute; to paint
The charms of heaven-born Virtue! So shall I
(Though with long interval of worth) aspire
To imitate the work of saints above,
Of Cherub and of Seraphim. My heart,
My talents, all I am, and all I have,
Is thine, O Father! Gracious Lord, accept
The humble dedication! Offer'd gifts
Of slaughter'd bulls and goats sacrificial
Thou hast refus'd: but lo, I come, O Lord!
To do thy will; the living sacrifice
Of an obedient heart I lay before thee:
This humble off'ring more shall please thee, Lord,
Than horned bullocks, ceremonial rites,
New moons, and Sabbaths, passovers, and fasts!
Yet those I too will keep; but not in lieu
Of holiness substantial, inward worth;
As commutation cheap for pious deeds
And purity of life, but as the types
Of better things; as fair external signs
Of inward holiness and secret truth.
But see, my father, good old Jesse comes!
To cheer the setting evening of whose life,
Content, a simple shepherd here I dwell,
Though Israel is in arms; and royal Saul,
Encamp'd in yonder field, defies Philistia.

JESSE, DAVID.

Jesse. Blest be the gracious pow'r who gave my age
To boast a son like thee! Thou art the staff

Which props my bending years, and makes me bear
The heavy burden of declining age
With fond complacence. How unlike thy fate,
O venerable Eli! But two sons,
But only two to gild the dim remains
Of life's departing day, and bless thy age,
And both were curses to thee! Witness, Heaven,
In all the cruel catalogue of pains
Humanity turns o'er, if there be one
So terrible to human tenderness
As an unnatural child!

David. O! my lov'd father!
Long may'st thou live, in years and honours rich;
To taste and to communicate the joys,
The thousand fond endearing charities,
Of tenderness domestic; Nature's best
And loveliest gift, with which she well atones
The niggard boon of fortune.

Jesse. O! my son!
Of all the graces which adorn thy youth,
I, with a father's fondness, must commend
Thy try'd humility. For though the seer
Pour'd on thy chosen head, the sacred oil
In sign of future greatness, in sure pledge
Of highest dignity, yet here thou dwell'st
Content with toil and careless of repose;
And (harder still for an ingenuous mind)
Content to be obscure; content to watch
With careful eye, thy humble father's flock!
O earthly emblem of celestial things!
So Israel's shepherd watches o'er his fold:
The weak ones in his fost'ring bosom bears:
And gently leads in his sustaining hand,
The feeble ones with young.

David. Know'st thou, my father,
Aught from the field? for though so near the camp,
Though war's proud ensigns stream on yonder plain,
And all Philistia's swarming hosts encamp,
Oppos'd to royal Saul, beneath whose banners
My brothers lift the spear—I have not left
My fleecy charge, by thee committed to me,
To learn the various fortunes of the war.

Jesse. And wisely hast thou done. Thrice happy realm,
Who shall submit one day to his command
Who can so well obey! Obedience leads
To certain honours. Not the tow'ring wing
Of eagle-plum'd ambition mounts so surely
To fortune's highest summit, as obedience.

[*A distant sound of trumpets.*

But why that sudden ardour, O my son?
That trumpet's sound (though so remote its voice,
We hardly catch the echo as it dies)
Has rous'd the mantling crimson in thy cheek,
Kindled the martial spirit in thine eye;
And my young shepherd feels an hero's fire!

David. Thou hast not told the posture of the war,
And much my beating bosom pants to hear.

Jesse. Uncertain is the fortune of the field.
I tremble for thy brothers, thus expos'd
To constant peril; nor for them alone
Does the quick feeling agonize my heart.
I feel for all!—I mourn, that ling'ring War
Still hangs his banner o'er my native land.
Belov'd Jerusalem! O War! what art thou?
At once the proof and scourge of man's fall'n state!
After the brightest conquest, what appears
Of all thy glories? for the vanquish'd, chains!
For the proud victor, what? Alas! to reign
O'er desolated nations! a drear waste,
By one man's crime, by one man's lust of pow'r,
Unpeopled! Ravag'd fields assume the place
Of smiling harvests, and uncultur'd plains
Succeed the fertile vineyard; barren waste
Deforms the spot once rich with luscious fig
And the fat olive.—Devastation reigns.
Here, rifled temples are the cavern'd dens
Of savage beasts, or haunt of birds obscene;
There, pop'lous cities blacken in the sun,
And in the general wreck, proud palaces
Lie undistinguish'd save by the dun smoke
Of recent conflagration. When the song
Of dear-bought joy, with many a triumph swell'd,
Salutes the victor's ear, and soothes his pride,
How is the grateful harmony profan'd
With the sad dissonance of virgin's cries,
Who mourn their brothers slain! of matrons hoar,
Who clasp their wither'd hands, and fondly ask,
With iteration shrill, their slaughter'd sons!
How is the laurel's verdure stain'd with blood,
And soil'd with widows' tears!

David. Thrice mournful truth!
Yet when our country's sacred rights are menac'd;
Her firm foundations shaken to their base;
When all we love, and all that we revere,
Our hearths and altars, children, parents, wives,
Our liberties and laws; the throne they guard,
Are scorn'd and trampl'd on—then, then, my father!
'Tis then Religion's voice; then God himself
Commands us to defend his injur'd name,
And think the victory cheaply bought with life
'Twere then inglorious weakness, mean self-love:
To lie inactive, when the stirring voice
Of the shrill trumpet wakes the patriot youth,
And, with heroic valour, bids them dare
The foul idolatrous bands, e'en to the death.

Jesse. God and thy country claim the life they gave;
No other cause can sanctify resentment.

David. Sure virtuous friendship is a noble cause!
O were the princely Jonathan in danger,
How would I die, well pleas'd, in his defence;
When, 'twas long since, then but a stripling boy
I made short sojourn in his father's palace,
(At first to soothe his troubled mind with song
His armour-bearer next) I well remember
The gracious bounties of the gallant prince.
How would he sit, attentive to my strain,
While to my harp I sung the harmless joys
Which crown a shepherd's life! How would he cry,
Bless'd youth! far happier in thy native worth,
Far richer in the talent Heav'n has lent thee,
Than if a crown hung o'er thy anxious brow.
The jealous monarch mark'd our growing friendship;
And as my favour grew with those about him,

His royal bounty lessen'd, till at length,
For Bethl'hem's safer shades I left the court.
Nor would these alter'd features now be known,
Grown into manly strength; nor this chang'd form,
Enlarg'd with age, and clad in russet weed.

Jesse. I have employment for thee, my lov'd son!
Will please thy active spirit. Go, my boy!
Haste to the field of war, to yonder camp,
Where in the vale of Elah mighty Saul
Commands the hosts of Israel. Greet thy brothers;
Observe their deeds, note their demeanour well,
And mark if on their actions Wisdom waits.
Bear to them too (for well the waste of war
Will make it needful) such plain healthful viands
As furnish out our frugal shepherd's meal.
And to the valiant captain of their host
Present such rural gifts as suit our fortune:
Heap'd on the board within my tent thou'lt find them.

David. With joy I'll bear thy presents to my brothers;
And to the valiant captain of their host
The rural gifts thy gratitude assigns him.
Delightful task!—for I shall view the camp!
What transport to behold the tented field,
The pointed spear, the blaze of shields and arms,
And all the proud accoutrements of war!
But, oh! far dearer transport would it yield me,
Could this right arm alone avenge the cause
Of injur'd Israel! could my single death
Preserve the guiltless thousands doom'd to bleed!

Jesse. Let not thy youth be dazzled, O my son!
With deeds of bold emprize, as valour only
Were virtue, and the gentle arts of peace,
Of truth, and justice, were not worth thy care.
When thou shalt view the splendours of the war,
The gay caparison, the burnish'd shield,
The plume-crown'd helmet, and the glitt'ring spear,
Scorn not the humble virtues of the shade,
Nor think that Heav'n views only with applause
The active merit and the busy toil
Of heroes, statesmen, and the bustling sons
Of public care. These have their just reward,
In wealth, in honours, and the well-earned fame
Their high achievements bring. 'Tis in this view
That virtue is her proper recompence:
Wealth, as its natural consequence, will flow
From industry: toil with success is crown'd:
From splendid actions high renown will spring.
Such is the usual course of human things;
For Wisdom Infinite permits, that thus
Effects to causes be proportionate,
And nat'ral ends by nat'ral means achiev'd.
But in the future estimate which Heaven
Will make of things terrestrial, know, my son,
That no inferior blessing is reserv'd
For the mild passive virtues: meek content,
Heroic self-denial, nobler far
Than all th' achievements noisy Fame reports,
When her shrill trump proclaims the proud success
Which desolates the nations. But, on earth,
These are not always prosperous—mark the
Eternal Justice keeps them for the bliss
Of final recompence, for the dread day
Of gen'ral retribution. O, my son!
The ostentatious virtues which still press
For notice and for praise; the brilliant deeds
Which live but in the eye of observation,
These have their meed at once. But there's a joy
To the fond votaries of Fame unknown,
To hear the still small voice of Conscience speak
Its whispering plaudit to the silent soul.
Heaven notes the sigh afflicted Goodness heaves;
Hears the low plaint by human ear unheard,
And from the cheek of patient Sorrow wipes
The tear, by mortal eye unseen or scorn'd.

David. As Hermon's dews their grateful freshness shed,
And cheer the herbage, and the flow'rs renew,
So do thy words a quickening balm infuse,
And grateful sink in my delighted soul.

Jesse. Go then, my child! and may the gracious God
Who bless'd our fathers, bless my much lov'd son!

David. Farewell, my father!—and of this be sure,
That not one precept from thy honour'd lips
Shall fall by me unnotic'd; not one grace,
One venerable virtue which adorns
Thy daily life, but I, with watchful care
And due observance, will in mine transplant it.

[*Exit* DAVID.

Jesse. He's gone! and still my aching eyes pursue
And strain their orbs still longer to behold him.
Oh! who can tell when next I may embrace him?
Who can declare the counsels of the Lord?
Or when the moment preordain'd by Heav'n
To fill his great designs, may come? This son,
This blessing of my age, is set apart
For high exploits; the chosen instrument
Of all-disposing Heav'n for mighty deeds.
Still I recall the day, and to my mind
The scene is ever present, when the seer,
Illustrious Samuel, to the humble shades
Of Bethlehem came, pretending sacrifice,
To screen his errand from the jealous king.
He sanctify'd us first, me and my sons;
For sanctity increas'd should still precede
Increase of dignity. When he declar'd
He came commission'd from on high to find,
Among the sons of Jesse, Israel's king,
Astonishment entranc'd my wond'ring soul!
Yet was it not a wild, tumultuous bliss;
Such rash delight as promis'd honours yield
To light vain minds: no, 'twas a doubtful joy,
Chastis'd by tim'rous Virtue, lest a gift
So splendid and so dang'rous might destroy
Him it was meant to raise. My eldest born,
Eliab, tall of stature, I presented;
But God, who judges not by outward form,
But tries the heart, forbade the holy prophet
To choose my eldest born. For Saul, he said,
Gave proof, that fair proportion, and the grace
Of limb and feature, ill repaid the want
Of virtue. All my other sons alike
By Samuel were rejected; till, at last,
On my young boy, on David's chosen head,
The prophet pour'd the consecrated oil.

Yet ne'er did pride elate him, ne'er did scorn
For his rejected elders swell his heart.
Not in such gentle charity to him
His haughtier brothers live : but all he pardons.
To meditation, and to humble toil,
To pray'r, and praise devoted, here he dwells.
O may the Graces which adorn retreat
One day delight a court! record his name
With saints and prophets, dignify his race,
And may the sacred songs his leisure frames
Instruct mankind, and sanctify a world!

PART II.

Scene—The Camp.

ELIAB, ABINADAB, ABNER, ISRAELITES.

Eliab. Still is the event of this long war uncertain :
Still do the adverse hosts, on either side,
Protract, with ling'ring caution, an encounter,
Which must to one be fatal.

Abinidab. This descent,
Thus to the very confines of our land,
Proclaims the sanguine hope that fires the foe.
In Ephes-dammim boldly they encamp;
Th' uncircumcis'd Philistines pitch their tents
On Judah's hallow'd earth.

Eliab. Full forty days
Has the insulting giant, proud Goliath,
The champion of Philistia, fiercely challeng'd
Some Israelitish foe. But who so vain
To dare such force unequal? who so bent
On sure destruction, to accept his terms,
And rush on death, beneath the giant force
Of his enormous bulk?

Abinadab. 'Tis near the time
When in the adjacent valley which divides
Th' opposing armies he is wont to make
His daily challenge.

Eliab. Much I marvel, brother,
No greetings from our father reach our ears.
With ease and plenty bless'd, he little recks
The daily hardships which his sons endure.
But see! behold his darling boy approaches!

Abin. How, David here! whence this unlook'd-for guest?

Eliab. A spy upon our actions; sent, no doubt,
To scan our deeds, with beardless gravity
Affecting wisdom; to observe each word,
To magnify the venial faults of youth,
And construe harmless mirth to foul offence.

Enter DAVID.

David. All hail, my dearest brothers!

Eliab. Means thy greeting
True love, or arrogant scorn?

David. O, most true love!
Sweet as the precious ointment which bedew'd
The sacred head of Aaron, and descended
Upon his hallow'd vest, so sweet, my brothers,
Is fond fraternal amity; such love
As my touch'd bosom feels at your approach.

Eliab. Still that fine glozing speech, those holy saws,
And all that trick of studied sanctity,
Of smooth-turn'd periods and trim eloquence,
Which charms thy doating father! But confess,
What dost thou here? Is it to sooth thy pride,
And gratify thy vain desire to roam
In quest of pleasures unallow'd? or com'st thou,
A willing spy, to note thy brothers' deeds?
Where hast thou left those few poor straggling sheep?
More suited to thy ignorance and years
The care of those, than here to wander idly :
Why cam'st thou hither?

David. Is there not a cause?
Why that displeasure kindling in thine eye,
My angry brother? why those taunts unkind?
Not idly bent on sport; not to delight
Mine eye with all this gay parade of war;
To gratify a roving appetite,
Or fondly to indulge a curious ear
With any tale of rumour, am I come;
But to approve myself a loving brother.
I bring the blessing of your aged sire,
With gifts of such plain cates and rural viands
As suit his frugal fortune. Tell me now,
Where the bold captain of your host encamps?

Eliab. Wherefore inquire? what boots it thee to know?
Behold him there : great Abner, fam'd in arms.

David. I bring thee, mighty Abner from my father,
(A simple shepherd swain in yonder vale)
Such humble gifts as shepherd swains bestow.

Abner. Thanks, gentle youth! with pleasure I receive
The grateful off'ring. Why does thy quick eye
Thus wander with unsatisfi'd delight?

David. New as I am to all the trade of war
Each sound has novelty; each thing I see
Attracts attention; every noise I hear
Awakes confus'd emotions; indistinct,
Yet full of charming tumult, sweet distraction
'Tis all delightful hurry! Oh! the joy
Of young ideas painted on the mind,
In the warm glowing colours fancy spread
On objects not yet known, when all is new,
And all is lovely! Ah! what warlike sound
Salutes my ravish'd ear?

[*Sound of trumpets.*

Abner. 'Tis the Philistine
Proclaiming, by his herald, through the ranks,
His near approach. Each morning he repeats
His challenge to our bands.

David. Ha! what Philistine?
Who is he?

Eliab. Wherefore ask? for thy raw youth
And rustic ignorance, 'twere fitter learn
Some rural art! some secret to prevent
Contagion in thy flocks; some better means
To save their fleece immaculate. These mean arts
Of soft inglorious peace far better suit
Thy low obscurity, than thus to seek
High things pertaining to exploits of arms.

David. Urg'd as I am I will not answer thee
Who conquers his own spirit, O my brother!
He is the only conqueror.—Again
That shout mysterious! Pray you (*to Abner*) tell me who
This proud Philistine is, who sends defiance
To Israel's hardy chieftians?

Abner. Stranger youth!
So lovely and so mild is thy demeanor,
So gentle and so patient; such the air

Of candour and of courage which adorns
Thy blooming features, thou hast won my love:
And I will tell thee.

David. Mighty Abner, thanks!

Abner. Thrice, and no more, he sounds, his daily rule!
This man of war, this champion of Philistia,
Is of the sons of Anak's giant-race:
Goliath is his name. His fearful stature,
Unparalell'd in Israel, measures more
Than twice three cubits. On his tow'ring head
A helm of burnish'd brass the giant wears,
So pond'rous, it would crush the stoutest man
In all our hosts. A coat of mailed armour
Guards his capacious trunk! compar'd with which,
The amplest oak that spreads his rugged arms
In Bashan's groves, were small. About his neck
A shining corslet hangs. On his vast thigh
The plaited cuiras, firmly jointed, stands.
But who shall tell the wonders of his spear,
And hope to gain belief! Of massive iron
Its temper'd frame, not less than the broad beam
To which the busy weaver hangs his loom:
Not to be wielded by a mortal hand,
Save by his own. An armour bearer walks
Before this mighty, champion, in his hand
Bearing the giant's shield. Thrice ev'ry morn
His herald sounds the trumpet of defiance!
Off'ring at once to end the long-drawn war
In single combat 'gainst that hardy foe
Who dares encounter him.

David. Say, mighty Abner,
What are the haughty terms of his defiance?

Abner. Proudly he stalks around th' extremest bounds
Of Elah's vale. His herald sounds the note
Of offer'd battle. Then the furious giant,
With such a voice as from the troubled sky
In vollied thunder breaks, thus sends his challenge:
'Why do you set your battle in array,
Ye men of Israel? Wherefore waste the lives
Of needless thousands? Why protract a war
Which may at once be ended? Are not you
Servants to Saul your king? and am not I
With triumph let me speak it, a Philistine?
Choose out a man from all your armed hosts,
Of courage most approv'd, and I will meet him;
His single arm to mine. Th' event of this
Shall fix the fate of Israel and Philistia.
If victory favour him, then will we live
Your tributary slaves; but if my arm
Be crown'd with conquest, you shall then live ours.
Give me a man, if your effeminate bands
A man can boast. Your armies I defy!'

David. What shall be done to him who shall subdue
This vile idolater?

Abner. He shall receive
Such ample bounties, such profuse rewards,
As might inflame the old, or warm the coward,
Were not the odds so desperate.

David. Say, what are they?

Abner. The royal Saul has promis'd that bold hero
Who should encounter and subdue Goliath,
All dignity and favour; that his house
Shall be set free from tribute, and ennobled
With the first honours Israel has to give.
As for the gallant conqueror himself,
No less a recompence than the fair princess,
Our monarch's peerless daughter.

David. Beauteous Michael!
It is indeed a boon which kings might strive for.
And has none answer'd yet this bold defiance?
What! all this goodly host of Israelites!
God's own peculiar people! all afraid,
T' assert God's injur'd honour and their own?
Where is the king, who in his early youth
Wrought deeds of fame! Where princely Jonathan?
Not so the gallant youth Philistia fear'd
At Bozez and at Seneh;* when the earth
Shook from her deep foundations to behold
The wond'rous carnage of his single hand
On the uncircumcis'd. When he exclaim'd,
With glorious confidence—'Shall numbers awe me?
God will protect his own: with him to save
It boots not, friends, by many or by few.'
This was an hero! Why does he delay
To meet this boaster? For thy courtesy,
Thrice noble Abner, I am bound to thank thee!
Wouldst thou complete thy gen'rous offices?
I dare not ask it.

Abner. Speak thy wishes freely:
My soul inclines to serve thee.

David. Then, O Abner,
Conduct me to the king! There is a cause
Will justify this boldness!

Eliab. Braggard, hold!

Abner. I take thee at thy word; and will, with speed,
Conduct thee to my royal master's presence.
In yonder tent the anxious monarch waits
Th' event of this day's challenge.

David. Noble Abner,
Accept my thanks. Now to thy private ear,
If so thy grace permit I will unfold
My secret soul, and ease my lab'ring breast,
Which pants with high designs, and beats for glory.

PART III.

Scene.—Saul's tent.

Saul. WHY was I made a king? what I have gain'd
In envy'd greatness and uneasy pow'r,
I've lost in peace of mind, in virtue lost!
Why did deceitful transports fire my soul
When Samuel plac'd upon my youthful brow
The crown of Israel? I had known content,
Nay happiness, if happiness unmix'd
To mortal man were known, had I still liv'd
Among the humble tents of Benjamin.
A shepherd's occupation was my joy,
And every guiltless day was crown'd with peace,
But now, a sullen cloud forever hangs
O'er the faint sunshine of my brightest hours,
Dark'ning the golden promise of the morn.
I ne'er shall taste the dear domestic joys

* 1 Samuel, xiv.

My meanest subjects know. True, I have sons,
Whose virtues would have charm'd a private man,
And drawn down blessings on their humble sire.
I love their virtues too; but 'tis a love
Which jealousy has poison'd. Jonathan
Is all a father's fondness could conceive
Of amiable and good—Of that no more!
He is too popular; the people doat
Upon th' ingenuous graces of his youth.
Curs'd popularity! which makes a father
Detest the merit of a son he loves,
How did their fond idolatry, perforce,
Rescue his sentenc'd life, when doom'd by lot
To perish at Beth-aven,* for the breach
Of strict injunction, that of all my bands,
Not one that day should taste of food and live!
My subjects clamour at this tedious war,
Yet of my num'rous arm'd chiefs not one
Has courage to engage this man of Gath.
O for a champion bold enough to face
This giant-boaster, whose repeated threats
Strike through my inmost soul! There was a time—
Of that no more! I am not what I was.
Should valiant Jonathan accept the challenge,
'Twould but increase his influence, raise his fame,
And make the crown sit lightly on my brow.
Ill could my wounded spirit brook the voice
Of harsh comparison 'twixt sire and son.

SAUL, ABNER.

Abner. What meditation holds thee thus engag'd,
O king! and keeps thine active spirit bound;
When busy war for other cares demands
Than ruminating thought and pale despair?

Saul. Abner draw near. My weary soul sinks down
Beneath the heavy pressure of misfortune.
O for that spirit which inflam'd my breast
With sudden fervour, when, among the seers
And holy sages my prophetic voice
Was heard attentive, and th' astonish'd throng,
Wond'ring, exclaim'd,—'Is Saul among the prophets?'
Where's that bold arm which quell'd the Amalekite,
And nobly spar'd fierce Agag and his flocks?
'Tis past! the light of Israel now is quench'd:
Shorn of his beams, my sun of glory sets!
Rise Moab, Edom, angry Ammon rise!
Come Gaza, Ashdod come! let Ekron boast,
And Askelon rejoice, for Saul is—nothing.

Abner. I bring thee news, O king!

Saul. My valiant uncle!
What can avail thy news? A soul oppress'd
Refuses still to hear the charmer's voice,
Howe'er enticingly he charm. What news
Can soothe my sickly soul, while Gath's fell giant
Repeats each morning to my frighten'd hosts
His daring challenge, none accepting it?

Abner. It is accepted.

Saul. Ha! By whom? how? when?
What prince, what gen'ral, what illustrious hero,
What vet'ran chief, what warrior of renown,
Will dare to meet the haughty foes defiance?
Speak, my brave gen'ral! noble Abner speak!

Abner. No prince, no warrior, no illustrious chief,
No vet'ran hero dares accept the challenge;
But what will move thy wonder, mighty king,
One train'd to peaceful deeds, and new to arms,
A simple shepherd swain!

Saul. O mockery!
No more of this light tale, it suits but ill
Thy bearded gravity: or rather tell it
To credulous age, or weak believing women;
They love whate'er is marvellous, and doat
On deeds prodigious and incredible,
Which sober sense rejects. I laugh to think
Of thy extravagance. A shepherd's boy
Encounter him whom nations dread to meet!

Abner. Is valour then peculiar to high birth?
If Heav'n had so decreed, know, scornful king,
That Saul the Benjamite had never reign'd.
No!—Glory darts her soul-pervading ray
On thrones and cottages, regardless still
Of all the artificial, nice distinctions
Vain human customs make.

Saul. Where is this youth?

Abner. Without thy tent he waits. Such humble sweetness,
Fir'd with the secret conscience of desert;
Such manly bearing, temper'd with such softness,
And so adorn'd with ev'ry outward charm
Of graceful form and feature, saw I never.

Saul. Bring me the youth.

Abner. He waits thy royal pleasure.
[*Exit Abner.*

Saul. What must I think? Abner himself is brave,
And skill'd in human kind: nor does he judge
So lightly, to be caught by specious words
And Fraud's smooth artifice, were there not marks
Of worth intrinsic. But behold he comes!
The youth too with him! Justly did he praise
The candour which adorns his open brow.

Re-enter Abner and David.

David. Hail mighty king!

Abner. Behold thy proffer'd champion!

Saul. Art thou the youth whose high heroic zeal
Aspires to meet the giant son of Anak?

David. If so the king permit.

Saul. Impossible!
Why, what experience has thy youth of arms?
Where, stripling, didst *thou* learn the trade of war?
Beneath what hoary vet'ran hast *thou* serv'd?
What feats hast *thou* achiev'd, what daring deeds?
What well-rang'd phalanx, say, what charging hosts,
What hard campaigns, what sieges hast thou seen?
Hast thou e'er scal'd the city's rampir'd wall
Or hurl'd the missile dart, or learn'd to poise
The warrior's deathful spear? The use of targe,
Of helm, and buckler, is to thee unknown.

David. Arms I have seldom seen. I little know

* 1 Samuel, xiv

Of war's proud discipline. The trumpet's clang,
The shock of charging hosts, the rampir'd wall,
Th' embattled phalanx, and the warrior's spear,
The use of targe and helm to me is new.
My zeal for God, my patriot love of Israel,
My reverence for my king, behold my claims!

Saul. But gentle youth! thou hast no fame in arms,
Renown, with her shrill clarion, never bore
Thy honour'd name to many a land remote;
From the fair regions where Euphrates laves
Assyria's borders to the distant Nile.

David. True, mighty king! I am indeed alike
Unbless'd by Fortune and to Fame unknown;
A lowly shepherd-swain of Judah's tribe:
But greatness ever springs from low beginnings.
That very Nile thou mention'st, whose broad stream
Bears fruitfulness and health through many a clime,
From an unknown, penurious, scanty source
Took its first rise. The forest oak, which shades
The sultry troops in many a toilsome march
Once an unheeded acorn lay. O king!
Who ne'er begins can never aught achieve
Of glorious. Thou thyself wast once unknown,
Till fair occasion brought thy worth to light.
Far higher views inspire my youthful heart
Than human praise: I seek to vindicate
Th' insulted honour of the God I serve.

Abner. 'Tis nobly said.

Saul. I love thy spirit, youth!
But dare not trust thy inexperienc'd arm
Against a giant's might. The sight of blood,
Though brave thou feel'st when peril is not nigh,
Will pale thy ardent cheek.

David. Not so, O king!
This youthful arm has been imbru'd in blood
Though yet no blood of man has ever stain'd it.
Thy servant's occupation is a shepherd.
With jealous care I watch'd my father's flock:
A brindled lion and a furious bear
Forth from the thicket rush'd upon the fold,
Seiz'd a young lamb, and tore their bleating spoil.
Urg'd by compassion for my helpless charge,
I felt a new-born vigour nerve my arm;
And, eager, on the foaming monsters rush'd.
The famish'd lion by his grisly beard,
Enrag'd, I caught, and smote him to the ground.
The panting monster struggling in my gripe,
Shook terribly his bristling mane, and lash'd
His own gaunt, gory sides; fiercely he ground
His gnashing teeth, and rolled his starting eyes,
Bloodshot with agony; then with a groan,
That wak'd the echoes of the mountain, died.
Nor did his grim associate 'scape my arm;
Thy servant slew the lion and the bear;
I kill'd them both, and bore their shaggy spoils
In triumph home: and shall I fear to meet
Th' uncircumcis'd Philistine? No: that God
Who sav'd me from the bear's destructive fang
And hungry lion's jaw, will not he save me
From this idolater?

Saul. He will, he will!
Go, noble youth! be valiant and be bless'd!
The God thou serv'st will shield thee in the fight,
And nerve thy arm with more than mortal strength.

Abner. So the bold Nazarite* a lion slew:
An earnest of his victories o'er Philistia!

Saul. Go, Abner; see the youth be well equipp'd
With shield and spear. Be it thy care to grace him
With all the fit accoutrements of war.
The choicest mail from my rich armory take,
And gird upon his thigh my own try'd sword
Of noblest temper'd steel.

Abner. I shall obey.

David. Pardon, O king! the coat of plaited mail
These limbs have never known; it would not shield,
'Twould but encumber one who never felt
The weight of armour.

Saul. Take thy wish, my son!
Thy sword then, and the God of Jacob guard thee!

PART IV.

Scene—Another part of the camp.

DAVID (*kneeling.*)

ETERNAL Justice! in whose awful scale
Th' event of battle hangs! Eternal Truth!
Whose beams illumines all! Eternal Mercy!
If, by thy attributes I may, unblam'd,
Address thee; Lord of glory! hear me now:
O teach these hands to war, these arms to fight.
Thou ever present help in time of need!
Let thy broad mercy, as a shield, defend,
And let thine everlasting arms support me!
Strong in thy strength, in thy protection safe
Then, though the heathen rage, I shall not fear.
Jehovah, be my buckler! Mighty Lord!
Thou who hast deign'd by humble instruments
To manifest the wonders of thy might,
Be present with me now! 'Tis thine own cause!
Thy wisdom sees events, thy goodness plans
Schemes baffling our conception—and, 'tis still
Omnipotence which executes the deed
Of high design, though by a feeble arm!
I feel a secret impulse drive me on;
And my soul springs impatient for the fight!
'Tis not the heated spirits, or warm blood
Of sanguine youth with which my bosom burns;
And, though I thirst to meet th' insulting foe,
And pant for glory, 'tis not, witness Heav'n!
'Tis not the sinful lust of fading fame,
The perishable praise of mortal man;
His praise I covet, whose applause is Life.

DAVID, ELIAB, ISRAELITES.

Eliab. What do I hear? thou truant! thou hast dar'd
E'en to the awful presence of the king
Bear thy presumption!

David. He who fears the Lord
Shall boldly stand before the face of kings,
And shall not be asham'd.

Eliab. But what wild dream
Has urg'd thee to this deed of desp'rate rashness?
Thou mean'st, so I have learn'd, to meet Goliath,
His single arm to thine.

* Samson. See Judges, chap. xiv.

David. 'Tis what I purpose,
Ev'n on this spot. Each moment I expect
His wish'd approach.
Eliab. Go home; return, for shame!
Nor madly draw destruction on thy head.
Thy doating father, when thy shepherd's coat,
Drench'd in thy blood, is brought him, will lament,
And rend his furrow'd cheek and silver hair,
As if some mighty loss had touch'd his age;
And mourn, ev'n as the partial patriarch mourn'd
When Joseph's bloody garment he receiv'd
From his less dear, nor less deserving, sons:
But whence that glitt'ring ornament which hangs
Useless upon thy thigh?
David. 'Tis the king's gift.
But thou art right; it suits not me, my brother!
Nor sword I mean to use, nor spear to poise,
Lest men should say I put my trust in arms,
Not in the Lord of Hosts.
Eliab. Then thou indeed
Art bent to seek thy death?
David. And what is death?
Is it so terrible to die, my brother?
Or grant it terrible, is it for that
The less inevitable? If, indeed
We could by stratagem elude the blow,
When some high duty calls us forth to die,
And thus for ever shun it, and escape
The universal lot,—then fond self-love,
Then cautious Prudence, boldly might produce
Their fine-spun arguments, their learn'd harangues,
Their cobweb arts, their phrase sophistical,
Their subtle doubts, and all the specious trick
Of selfish cunning lab'ring for its end.
But since, howe'er protracted, death will come,
Why fondly study, with ingenious pains,
To put it off! To breathe a little longer
Is to defer our fate, but not to shun it.
Small gain! which Wisdom with indiff'rent eye
Beholds. Why wish to drink the bitter dregs
Of life's exhausted chalice, whose last runnings,
Ev'n at the best, are vapid! Why not die
(If Heav'n so will) in manhood's op'ning bloom,
When all the flush of life is gay about us!
When sprightly youth with many a new-born joy,
Solicits every sense! So may we then
Present a sacrifice, unmeet indeed,
(Ah, how unmeet!) but less unworthy far,
Than the world's leavings; than a worn out heart,
By vice enfeebled, and by vain desires
Sunk and exhausted!
Eliab. Hark! I hear a sound
Of multitudes approaching!
David. 'Tis the giant!
I see him not, but hear his measur'd pace.
Eliab. Look, where his pond'rous shield is borne before him!
David. Like a broad moon its ample disk portends.
But soft!—what unknown prodigy appears?
A moving mountain cas'd in polish'd brass!
Eliab (*getting behind David*) How's this?
Thou dost not tremble. Thy firm joints
Betray no fear; thy accents are not broken;
Thy cheek retains its red; thine eye its lustre,
He comes more near! Dost thou not fear him now?
David. No,
The vast colossal statue nor inspires
Respect nor fear. Mere magnitude of form,
Without proportion'd intellect and valour,
Strikes not my soul with rev'rence or with awe.
Eliab. Near, and more near he comes! I hold it rash
To stay so near him, and expose a life
Which may, hereafter serve the state.
Farewell. [*Exit.*

[GOLIATH *advances, clad in complete armour. One bearing his shield precedes him. The opposing armies are seen at a distance, drawn up on each side of the valley.* GOLIATH *begins to speak before he comes on.* DAVID *stands in the same place, with an air of indifference.*]

Goliath. Where is this mighty man of war, who dares
Accept the challenge of Philistia's chief?
What victor king, what gen'ral drench'd in blood,
Claims this high privilege? What are his rights?
What proud credentials does the boaster bring
To prove his claim? What cities laid in ashes?
What ruin'd provinces? What slaughter'd realms?
What heads of heroes, and what hearts of kings,
In battle kill'd, or at his altars slain,
Has he to boast? Is his bright armory
Thick set with spears, and swords, and coats of mail
Of vanquish'd nations, by his single arm
Subdu'd? Where is the mortal man so bold,
So much a wretch, so out of love with life,
To dare the weight of this uplifted spear,
Which never fell innoxious? Yet I swear,
I grudge the glory to this parting soul
To fall by this right hand. 'Twill sweeten death,
To know he had the honour to contend
With the dread son of Anak. Latest time
From blank oblivion shall retrieve his name
Who dar'd to perish in unequal fight
With Gath's triumphant champion. Come, advance.
Philistia's gods to Israel's. Sound, my herald—
Sound for the battle straight.
[*Herald sounds the trumpet.*
David. Behold thy foe!
Goliath. I see him not.
David. Behold him here!
Goliath. Say, where!
Direct my sight. I do not war with boys.
David. I stand prepar'd: thy single arm to mine.
Goliath. Why this is mockery, minion! it may chance
To cost thee dear. Sport not with things above thee!
But tell me who of all this num'rous host
Expects his death from me? Which is the man
Whom Israel sends to meet my bold defiance?
David. Th' election of my sov'reign falls on me.

Goliath. On thee! on thee! By Dagon, 'tis too much!
Thou curled minion! thou a nation's champion!
'Twould move my mirth at any other time;
But trifling 's out of tune, begone, light boy!
And tempt me not too far.

David. I do defy thee,
Thou foul idolator! Hast thou not scorn'd
The armies of the living God I serve?
By me he will avenge upon thy head
Thy nation's sins and thine. Arm'd with his name,
Unshrinking, I dare meet the stoutest foe
That ever bath'd his hostile spear in blood.

Goliath. (*ironically*) Indeed! 'tis wond'rous well,
Now, by my gods,
The stripling plays the orator! Vain boy!
Keep close to that same bloodless war of words,
And thou shalt still be safe. Tongue-valiant warrior!
Where is thy sylvan crook, with garlands hung,
Of idle field flowers? where thy wanton harp,
Thou dainty finger'd hero? better strike
Its notes lascivious, or the lulling lute
Touch softly, than provoke the trumpet's rage.
I will not stain the honour of my spear
With thy inglorious blood. Shall that fair cheek
Be scar'd with wounds unseemly? Rather go
And hold fond dalliance with the Syrian maids;
To wanton measures dance, and let them braid
The bright luxuriance of thy golden hair;
They, for their lost Adonis, may mistake
Thy dainty form.

David. Peace, thou unhallow'd railer!
O tell it not in Gath, nor let the sound
Reach Askelon, how once your slaughter'd lords
By mighty Samson* found one common grave:
When his broad shoulder the firm-pillars heav'd,
And to its base the tott'ring fabric shook.

Goliath. Insulting boy! perhaps thou hast not heard
The infamy of that glorious day,
When your weak host at Eben-ezer† pitch'd
Their quick-abandon'd tent? Then when your ark,
Your talisman, your charm, your boasted pledge
Of safety and success, was tamely lost!
And yet not tamely, since by *me* 'twas won.
When with this good right arm I thinn'd your ranks,
And bravely crush'd, beneath a single blow
The chosen guardians of this vaunted shrine,
Hophni‡ and Phineas. The fam'd ark itself
I bore to Ashdod.

David. I remember too,
Since thou provok'st th' unwelcome truth, how all
Your blushing priests beheld their idol's shame;
When prostrate Dagon fell before the ark,
And your frail god was shiver'd. Then Philistia,
Idolatrous Philistia, flew for succour
To Israel's help, and all her smitten nobles
Confess'd the Lord was God; and the bless'd ark.
Gladly, with reverential awe restor'd.

Goliath. By Ashod's fane thou ly'st.

* Judges, c. xvi. † Samuel c. v
‡ Commentators say, that Chaldee paraphrase makes Goliath boast that he had killed Hophni and Phineas, and taken the ark prisoner.

Now will I meet thee,
Thou insect warrior, since thou dar'st me thus!
Already I behold thy mangled limbs,
Dissever'd each from each, ere long to feed
The fierce blood-snuffing vulture. Mark me well.
Around my spear I'll twist thy shining locks,
And toss in air thy head all gash'd with wounds,
Thy lip yet quiv'ring with the dire convulsion
Of recent death!—Art thou not terrify'd?

David. No:
True courage is not mov'd by breath of words:
While rash bravery of boiling blood,
Impetuous, knows no settled principle.
A fev'rish tide, it has its ebbs and flows,
As spirits raise or fall, as wine inflames,
Or circumstances change: but inborn Courage,
The gen'rous child of Fortitude and Faith,
Holds its firm empire in the constant soul;
And like the steadfast pole-star, never once
From the same fix'd and faithful point declines.

Goliath. The curses of Philistia's gods be on thee!
This fine-drawn speech is meant to lengthen out
That little life thy words pretend to scorn.

David. Ha! say'st thou so? Come on then. Mark us well.
Thou com'st to me with sword, and spear, and shield;
In the dread name of Israel's God I come;
The living Lord of Hosts, whom thou defy'st!
Yet though no shield I bring, no arms except
These five smooth stones I gather'd from the brook,
With such a simple sling as shepherd's use—
Yet all expos'd defenceless as I am,
The God I serve shall give thee up a prey
To my victorious arm. This day I mean
To make the uncircumcis'd tribes confess
There is a God in Israel. I will give thee,
Spite of thy vaunted strength and giant bulk,
To glut the carrion kites. Nor thee alone;
The mangled carcases of your thick hosts
Shall spread the plains of Elah, till Philistia,
Through all her trembling tents and flying bands,
Shall own that Judah's God is God indeed!
—I dare thee to the trial.

Goliath. Follow me—
In this good spear I trust.

David. I trust in Heav'n!
The God of battle stimulates my arm,
And fires my soul with ardour not its own.

PART V.

Scene—The tent of Saul.

Saul (*rising from his couch.*) Oh! that I knew the black and midnight arts
Of wizard sorcery! that I could call
The slumb'ring spirit from the shades of hell!
Or, like the Chaldean sages, could foreknow
Th' event of things unacted! I might then
Anticipate my fortune. How I 'm fall'n!
The sport of vain chimeras, the weak slave
Of fear and fancy; coveting to know
The arts obscene, which foul diviners use.
Thick blood and moping Melancholy lead

To baleful Superstition—that fell fiend,
Whose with'ring charms blast the fair bloom of Virtue.
Why did my wounded pride with scorn reject
The wholesome truths which holy Samuel told me?
Why drive him from my presence? he might now
Raise my sunk soul, and my benighted mind
Enlighten'd with religion's cheering ray.
He dar'd to menace me with loss of empire;
And I, for that bold honesty, dismiss'd him.
'Another shall possess thy throne,' he cry'd:
'A stranger!' This unwelcome prophecy
Has lined my crown and strew'd my couch with thorns.
Each ray of op'ning merit I discern
In friend or foe, distracts my troubled soul,
Lest he should prove my rival. But this morn,
Ev'n my young champion lovely as he look'd
In blooming valour, struck me to the soul
With Jealousy's barb'd dart. O Jealousy!
Thou ugliest fiend of hell! thy deadly venom
Preys on my vitals, turns the healthful hue
Of my fresh cheek to haggard sallowness,
And drinks my spirit up.

[*A flourish of trumpets, shouting, &c.*

What sounds are those?
The combat is decided. Hark! again
Those shouts proclaim it! Now, O God of Jacob,
If yet thou hast not quite withdrawn from Saul
Thy light and favour, prosper me this once!
But Abner comes! I dread to hear his tale!
Fair hope, with smiling face but ling'ring foot,
Has long deceiv'd me.

Abner. King of Israel, hail!
Now thou art king indeed. The youth has conquer'd:
Goliath's dead.

Saul. Oh speak, thy tale again,
Lest my fond ears deceive me!

Abner. Thy young champion
Has slain the giant.

Saul. Then God is gracious still,
In spite of my offences! But good Abner!
How was it? Tell me all. Where is my champion?
Quick let me press him to my grateful heart,
And pay him a king's thanks. And yet, who knows,
This forward friend may prove an active foe!
No more of that. Tell me the whole, brave Abner!
And paint the glorious acts of my young hero!

Abner. Full in the centre of the camp he stood!
"Th' opposing armies rang'd on either side
In proud array. The haughty giant stalk'd
Stately across the valley. Next the youth
With modest confidence advanc'd. Nor pomp,
Nor gay parade, nor martial ornament,
His graceful form adorn'd. Goliath strait,
With solemn state began the busy work
Of dreadful preparation. In one place
His closely jointed mail an op'ning left
For air, and only one: the watchful youth
Mark'd that the beaver of his helm was up.
Meanwhile the giant such a blow devis'd
As would have crush'd him. This the youth perceiv'd,
And from his well-directed sling quick hurl'd,
With dex'trous aim a stone, which sunk, deep lodg'd,
In the capacious forehead of the foe.
Then with a cry, as loud and terrible
As Lybian lions roaring for their young,
Quite stunn'd, the furious giant stagger'd, reel'd,
And fell: the mighty mass of man fell prone.
With its own weight his shatter'd bulk was bruis'd.
His clattering arms rung dreadfully through the field,
And the firm basis of the solid earth
Shook. Chok'd with blood and dust, he curs'd his gods,
And died blaspheming! Straight the victor youth
Drew from his sheath the giant's pond'rous sword,
And from the enormous trunk the gory head,
Furious in death, he sever'd. The grim visage
Look'd threat'ning still, and still frown'd horribly.

Saul. O glorious deed! O valiant conqueror!

Abner. The youth so calm appear'd, so nobly firm,
So cool, yet so intrepid, that these eyes
Ne'er saw such temp'rate valour so chastis'd
By modesty.

Saul. Thou dwell'st upon his praise
With needless circumstance. 'Twas nobly done;
But others too have fought!

Abner. None, none so bravely.

Saul. What follow'd next?

Abner. The shouting Israelites
On the Philistians rush'd, and still pursue
Their routed remnants. In dismay, their bands,
Disorder'd fly, while shouts of loud acclaim
Pursue their brave deliverer. Lo, he comes!
Bearing the giant's head and shining sword,
His well-earn'd trophies.

SAUL, ABNER, DAVID.

[DAVID *bearing* GOLIATH'S *head and sword. He kneels and lays both at* SAUL'S *feet.*

Saul. Welcome to my heart,
My glorious champion! My deliverer welcome!
How shall I speak the swelling gratitude
Of my full heart! or give thee the high praise
Thy gallant deeds deserve!

David. O mighty king!
Sweet is the breath of praise when given by those
Whose own high merit claims the praise they give.
But let not this one prosperous event,
By heav'n directed, be ascrib'd to me;
I might have fought with equal skill and courage,
And not have gain'd this conquest; then had shame
Harsh obloquy, and foul disgrace, befallen me:
But prosp'rous fortune gains the praise of valour

Saul. I like not this. In every thing superior.
He soars above me (*aside.*)—Modest youth, thou 'rt right.
And fortune, as thou say'st, deserves the praise
We give to human valour.

David. Rather say
The God of Hosts deserves it.

Saul. Tell me youth,
What is thy name, and what thy father's house?
David. My name is David; Jesse is my sire:
An humble Bethle'mite of Judah's tribe.
Saul. David, the son of Jesse! Sure that name
Has been familiar to me. Nay thy voice
Thy form and features, I remember too,
Though faint and indistinctly.
Abner. In this hero
Behold thy sweet musician; he whose harp
Expell'd the melancholy fiend, whose pow'r
Enslav'd thy spirit.
Saul. This the modest youth,
Whom for his skill and virtues I preferr'd
To bear my armour?
David. I am he, O king!
Saul. Why this concealment? tell me valiant David,
Why didst thou hide thy birth and name till now?
David. O king! I would not aught from favour claim,
Or on remember'd services presume;
But on the strength of my own actions stand
Ungrac'd and unsupported.
Abner. Well he merits
The honours which await him. Why, O king,
Dost thou delay to bless his doubting heart
With his well-earn'd rewards! Thy lovely daughter,
By right of conquest his!
Saul. (*to David.*) True: thou hast won her.
She shall be thine. Yes, a king's word is past.
David. O boundless blessing! What shall she be mine,
For whom contending monarchs might renounce
Their slighted crowns!
[*Sounds of musical instruments heard at a distance. Shouting and singing. A grand procession. Chorus of Hebrew women.*]
Saul. How 's this! what sounds of joy
Salute my ears! What means this needless pomp!
This merry sound of tabret and of harp!
What means these idle instruments of triumph?
These women, who in fair procession move,
Making sweet melody?
Abner. To pay due honour
To David are they come.
Saul. (*aside.*) A rival's praise
Is discord to my ear! They might have spar'd
This idle pageantry; it wounds my soul!
[*Martial symphony: after which, chorus of women sing.*]

I.

PREPARE! your festal rites prepare!
Let your triumphs rend the air!
Idol gods shall reign no more:
We the living Lord adore!
Let heathen hosts on human helps repose,
Since Israel's God has routed Israel's foes.

II.

Let remotest nations know
Proud Goliath's overthrow.
Fall'n Philistia, is thy trust,
Dagon mingles with the dust!
Who fears the Lord of Glory, need not fear
The brazen armour or the lifted spear.

III.

See, the routed squadron fly!
Hark the clamours rend the sky!
Blood and carnage stain the field!
See the vanquish'd nations yield!
Dismay and terror fill the frighten'd land,
While conq'ring David routs the trembling band.

IV.

Lo! upon the tented field
Royal Saul has thousands kill'd!
Lo! upon th' ensanguin'd plain
David has ten thousand slain!
Let mighty Saul his vanquish'd thousands tell,
While tenfold triumphs David's victories swell.

BELSHAZZAR:

A SACRED DRAMA.

How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, who didst weaken the nations!—*Isaiah.*

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

BALSHAZZAR, king of Babylon.
NITOCRIS, the queen mother.
Courtiers, Astrologers, Parasites.
DANIEL, the Jewish Prophet.
Captive Jews, &c. &c.

Scene—Babylon. Time—Night.

The subject is taken from the fifth chapter of the Prophet Daniel.

PART I.

Scene—Near the palace of Babylon.

DANIEL AND CAPTIVE JEWS.

Dan. PARENT of Life and Light! Sole Source of Good!
Whose tender mercies through the tide of time,
In long successive order, have sustain'd,
And sav'd the sons of Israel! Thou whose power
Deliver'd righteous Noah from the flood,
The whelming flood, the grave of human kind!
Oh Thou, whose guardian care and outstretch'd hand

Rescued young Isaac from the lifted arm,
Rais'd, at thy bidding, to devote a son,
An only son, doom'd by his sire to die:
(O saving faith, by such obedience prov'd!
O blest obedience, hallow'd thus by faith!
Thou, who in mercy sav'dst the chosen race
In the wild desert, and didst there sustain them
By wonder-working love, though they rebell'd
And murmur'd at the miracles that sav'd them!
O hear thy servant Daniel! hear and help!
Thou, whose almighty power did after raise
Successive leaders to defend our race;
Who sentest valiant Joshua to the field,
The people's champion, to the conqu'ring field,
Where the revolving planet of the night,
Suspended in her radiant round, was stay'd;
And the bright sun arrested in his course,
Stupendously stood still!

CHORUS OF JEWS.

I.

What ail'd thee, that thou stood'st still,
O sun! nor did thy flaming orb decline!
And thou, O moon! in Ajalon's low vale,
Why didst thou long before thy period shine?

II.

Was it at Joshua's dread command,
The leader of the Israelitish band?
Yes—at a mortal bidding both stood still;
'Twas Joshua's word, but 'twas Jehovah's will.

III.

What all-controlling hand had force
To stop eternal Nature's constant course?
The wand'ring moon to one fix'd spot confine,
But His whose fiat gave them first to shine?

Dan. O Thou! who, when thy discontented host,
Tir'd of Jehovah's rule, desir'd a king,
In anger gav'st them Saul; and then again
Did'st wrest the regal sceptre from his hand
To give it David—David, best belov'd!
Illustrious David! poet, prophet, king;
Thou who did'st suffer Solomon the wise
To build a glorious Temple to thy name,—
O hear thy servants, and forgive us too!
If by severe necessity compell'd,
We worship here—we have no temple now:
Altar or sanctuary none is left.

CHORUS OF JEWS.

O Judah! let thy captive sons deplore
Thy far-fam'd temple 's now no more!
Fall'n is thy sacred fane, thy glory gone!
Fall'n is thy temple, Solomon!
Ne'er did Barbaric kings behold,
With all their shining gems, their burnish'd gold,
A fane so perfect, bright, and fair:
For God himself was wont t' inhabit there.
Between the cherubim his glory stood,
While the high-priest alone the dazzling splendour view'd.
How fondly did the Tyrian artist strive,
His name to latest time should live!
Such wealth the stranger wonder'd to behold:
Gold were the tablets, and the vases gold.
Of cedar such an ample store,
Exhausted Lebanon could yield no more.
Bending before the Ruler of the sky,
Well might the royal founder cry,
Fill'd with an holy dread, a rev'rend fear,
Will God in very deed inhabit here?
The heaven of heavens beneath his feet,
Is for the bright inhabitant unmeet:
Archangels prostrate wait his high commands,
And will he deign to dwell in temples made with hands?

Dan. Yes, Thou art ever present, Pow'r Supreme
Not circumscrib'd by time, nor fix'd to space,
Confin'd to altars, nor to temples bound.
In wealth, in want, in freedom, or in chains,
In dungeons or on thrones, the faithful find thee!
E'en in the burning caldron thou wast near
To Shadrach and the holy brotherhood:
The unhurt martyrs bless'd Thee in the flames,
They sought, and found Thee; call'd, and Thou wast there.

First Jew. How chang'd our state! Judah, thy glory 's fallen!
Thy joys for hard captivity exchang'd:
And thy sad sons breathe the polluted air
Of Babylon, where deities obscene
Insult the living God; and to his servants,
The priests of wretched idols made with hands,
Show contumelious scorn.

Dan. 'Tis heaven's high will.

Second Jew. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem!
If I not fondly cherish thy lov'd image,
E'en in the giddy hour of thoughtless mirth;
If I not rather view thy prostrate walls
Than haughty Babylon's imperial tow'rs—
Then may my tongue refuse to frame the strains
Of sweetest harmony, my rude right hand
Forget, with sounds symphonius, to accord
The harp of Jesse's son to Sion's song.

First Jew. Oft on Euphrates' ever verdant banks
Where drooping willows form a mournful shade
With all the pride which prosp'rous fortunes give,
And all th' unfeeling mirth of happy men,
Th' insulting Babylonians ask a song;
Such songs as erst in better days were sung
By Korah's sons, or heav'n-taught Asaph set
To loftiest measures; then our bursting hearts
Feel all their woes afresh; the galling chain
Of bondage crushes then the free-born soul
With wringing anguish from the trembling lip
Th' unfinish'd cadence falls; and the big tear,
While it relieves, betrays the wo-fraught soul.
For who can view Euphrates' pleasant stream,
Its drooping willows, and its verdant banks,
And not to wounded memory recall
The piny groves of fertile Palestine,
The vales of Solyma, and Jordan's stream!

Dan. Firm faith and deep submission to high heaven
Will teach us to endure without a murmur
What seems so hard. Think what the holy host
Of patriarchs, saints, and prophets have sustain'd,
In the blest cause of truth! And shall not we,
O men of Judah! dare what these have dar'd
And boldly pass through the refining fire
Of fierce affliction? Yes, be witness, Heaven!
Old as I am, I will not shrink at death,
Come in what shape it may, if God so will,
By peril to confirm and prove my faith.

Oh! I would dare yon den of hungry lions,
Rather than pause to fill the task assign'd
By wisdom Infinite. Nor think I boast,
Not in myself, but in thy strength I trust,
Spirit of God!

First Jew. Prophet, thy words support,
And raise our sinking souls.

Dan. Behold yon palace;
There proud Belshazzar keeps his wanton court!
I knew it once beneath another lord,
His grandsire,* who subdu'd Jehoiachin,
And hither brought sad Judah's captive tribes;
And with them brought the rich and precious relics
Of our fam'd temple; all the holy treasure,
The golden vases, and the sacred cups,
Which grac'd, in happier times, the sanctuary.

Second Jew. May HE to whose blest use they were devoted,
Preserve them from pollution; and once more,
In his own gracious time restore the temple!

Dan. I, with some favour'd youths of Jewish race
Was lodg'd in the king's palace, and instructed
In all the various learning of the East;
But HE, on whose great name our fathers call'd,
Preserv'd us from the perils of a court,
Warn'd us to guard our youthful appetites,
And still with holy fortitude reject
The pamp'ring viands Luxury presented;
Fell Luxury; more perilous to youth
Than storms or quicksands, poverty or chains:

Second Jew. He who can guard 'gainst the low baits of sense,
Will find Temptations arrows hurtless strike
Against the brazen shield of Temperance.
For 'tis th' inferior appetites enthral
The man, and quench th' immortal light within him;
The senses take the soul an easy prey,
And sink th' imprison'd spirit into brute.

Dan. Twice,† by the Spirit of God, did I expound
The visions of the king; his soul was touch'd,
And twice did he repent, and prostrate fall
Before the God of Daniel: yet again,
Pow'r, flattery, and prosperity, undid him.
When from the lofty ramparts of his palace
He view'd the splendours of the royal city,
That magazine of wealth, which proud Euphrates
Wafts from each distant corner of the earth;
When he beheld the adamantine tow'rs,
The brazen gates, the bulwarks of his strength,
The pendant gardens, Art's stupendous work,
The wonder of the world! the proud Chaldean,
Mad with th' intoxicating fumes which rise
When uncontroll'd ambition grasps at once
Dominion absolute, and boundless wealth,
Forgot he was a man, forgot his god!
'This mighty Babylon is mine,' he cry'd;
'My wond'rous pow'r, *my* godlike arm achiev'd it.
I scorn submission; own no Deity
Above my own.'—While the blasphemer spoke,
The wrath of Heav'n inflicted instant vengeance;
Stripp'd him of that bright reason he abus'd;
And drove him from the cheerful haunts of men,
A naked, wretched, helpless, senseless thing;
Companion of the brutes, his equals now.

First Jew. Nor does his impious grandson, proud Belshazzar,
Fall short of his offences; nay, he wants
The valiant spirit and the active soul
Of his progenitor; for Pleasure's slave,
Though bound in silken chains, and only tied
In flowery fetters, seeming light and loose,
Is more subdu'd than the rash casual victim
Of anger or ambition; these indeed
Burn with a fiercer but a short-lived fire;
While pleasure with a constant flame consumes,
War slays her thousands, but destructive Pleasure,
More fell, more fatal, her ten thousands slays:
The young luxurious king she fondly woos
In ev'ry shape of am'rous blandishment;
With adulation smooth ensnares his soul;
With love betrays him, and with wine inflames.
She strews her magic poppies o'er his couch,
And with delicious opiates charms him down,
In fatal slumbers bound. Though Babylon
Is now, invested by the warlike troops
Of royal Cyrus, Persia's valiant prince;
Who, in conjunction with the Median king;
Darius, fam'd for conquest, now prepares
To storm the city: not the impending horrors
Which ever wait a siege have pow'r to wake
To thought or sense th' intoxicated king.

Dan. E'en in this night of universal dread,
A mighty army threat'ning at the gates;
This very night, as if in scorn of danger,
The dissolute Belshazzar holds a feast
Magnificently impious, meant to honour
Belus, the fav'rite Babylonish idol.
Lew'd parasites compose his wanton court,
Whose impious flatt'ries sooth his monstrous crimes:
They justify his vices and extol
His boastful phrase, as if he were some god:
Whate'er he says, they say; what he commands,
Implicitly they do; they echo back
His blasphemies with shouts of loud acclaim;
And when he wounds the tortur'd ear of Virtue,
They cry "All hail! Belshazzar live for ever!"
To-night a thousand nobles fill his hall,
Princes, and all the dames who grace the court;
All but his virtuous mother, sage Nitocris:
Ah! how unlike the impious king her son!
She never mingles in the midnight fray,
Nor crowns the guilty banquet with her presence.
The royal fair is rich in every virtue
Which can adorn the queen or grace the woman.
But for the wisdom of her prudent counsels
This wretched empire had been long undone.
Not fam'd Semiramis, Assyria's pride,
Could boast a brighter mind or firmer soul;
Beneath the gentle reign of Merodach,*
Her royal lord, our nation tasted peace.
Our captive monarch, sad Jehoiachin,
Grown gray in a close prison's horrid gloom,
He freed from bondage; brought the hoary king

* Nebuchadnezzar.

† Daniel, chap. ii. and iv.

* 2 Kings, chap. xxiv.

To taste once more the long-forgotten sweets
Of liberty and light, sustain'd his age,
Pour'd in his wounds the lenient balm of kindness,
And blest his setting hour of life with peace.

[*Sound of trumpets is heard at a distance.*

First Jew. That sound proclaims the banquet is begun.

Second Jew. Hark! the licentious uproar grows more loud,
The vaulted roof resounds with shouts of mirth,
And the firm palace shakes! Retire my friends;
This madness is not meet for sober ears.
If any of our race were found so near,
'Twould but expose us to the rude attack
Of ribaldry obscene and impious jests
From these mad sons of Belial, more inflam'd
To deeds of riot by the wanton feast.

Dan. Here part we then! but when again to meet
Who knows, save heaven? Yet, O my friends! I feel
An impulse more than human stir my breast.
Wrapt in prophetic vision,* I behold
Things hid as yet from mortal sight. I see
The dart of vengeance tremble in the air,
Ere long to pierce the impious king. E'en now
The desolating angel stalks abroad,
And brandishes aloft the two-edg'd sword
Of retribution keen; he soon will strike,
And Babylon shall weep as Sion wept.
Pass but a little while, and you shall see
This queen of cities prostrate on the earth.
This haughty mistress of the kneeling world,
How shall she sit dishonour'd in the dust,
In tarnish'd pomp and solitary wo!
How shall she shroud her glories in the dark,
And in opprobrious silence hide her head!
Lament, O virgin daughter of Chaldea!
For thou shalt fall! imperial queen, shalt fall!
No more Sidonian robes shall grace thy limbs.
To purple garments sackcloth shall succeed,
And sordid dust and ashes shall supply
The od'rous nard and cassia. Thou, who said'st
I AM, and there is none beside me: thou,
E'en thou, imperial Babylon, shalt fall!
Thy glory quite eclips'd! The pleasant sound
Of viol and of harp shall charm no more;
Nor song of Syrian damsels shall be heard,
Responsive to the lute's luxurious note:
But the loud bittern's cry, the raven's croak,
The bat's fell scream, the lonely owl's dull plaint,
And ev'ry hideous bird, with ominous shriek,
Shall scare affrighted Silence from thy walls:
While Desolation, snatching from the hand
Of Time the scythe of ruin, sits aloft,
Or stalks in dreadful majesty abroad.
I see th' exterminating fiend advance,
E'en now I see her glare with horrid joy,
See tower's imperial mould'ring at her touch;
She glances on the broken battlement,
She eyes the crumbling column, and enjoys
The work of ages prostrate in the dust—
Then, pointing to the mischiefs she has made,
Exulting cries, This once was Babylon!

* See the Prophecies of Isaiah, chap. xlvii. and others.

PART II.

Scene—the court of Belshazzar. The king seated on a magnificent throne. Princes, nobles, and attendants. Ladies of the court. Music—A superb banquet.

1st cour. (*rises and kneels.*) HAIL mighty king!

2d cour. Belshazzar, live for ever!

3d cour. Sun of the world, and light of kings, all hail!

4th cour. With lowly rev'rence, such as best becomes
The humblest creatures of imperial power,
Behold a thousand nobles bend before thee!
Princes far fam'd, and dames of high descent:
Yet all this pride of wealth, this boast of beauty,
Shrinks into nought before thine awful eye!
And lives or dies as the king frowns or smiles!

Bel. This is such homage as becomes your loves.
And suits the mighty monarch of mankind.

5th cour. The bending world should prostrate thus before thee;
And pay not only praise but adoration!

Belshazzar (*rises and comes forward.*)
Let dull Philosophy preach self-denial;
Let envious Poverty and snarling Age
Proudly declaim against the joys they know not.
Let the deluded Jews, who fondly hope
Some fancied heaven hereafter, mortify,
And lose the actual blessings of this world
To purchase others which may never come.
Our gods may promise less, but give us more
Ill would my ardent spirit be content
With meagre abstinence and hungry hope.
Let those misjudging Israelites, who want
The nimble spirits and the active soul,
Call their blunt feelings virtue: let them drudge,
In regular progression, through the round
Of formal duty and of daily toil;
And when they want the genius to be happy,
Believe their harsh austerity is goodness.
If there be gods, they meant we should enjoy:
Why give us else these tastes and appetites?
And why the means to crown them with indulgence?
To burst the feeble bonds which hold the vulgar,
Is noble daring.

1st cour. And is therefore worthy
The high imperial spirit of Belshazzar.

2d cour. Behold a banquet which the gods might share!

Bel. To-night, my friends, your monarch shall be blest
With ev'ry various joy; to-night is ours;
Nor shall the envious gods, who view our bliss,
And sicken as they view, to-night disturb us.
Bring all the richest spices of the East;
The od'rous cassia and the dropping myrrh,
The liquid amber and the fragant gums,
Rob Gilead of its balms, Belshazzar bids,
And leave the Arabian groves without an odour.
Bring freshest flow'rs, exhaust the blooming spring,
Twine the green myrtle with the short-liv'd rose;
And ever, as the blushing garland fades,
We'll learn to snatch the fugitive delight,

And grasp the flying joy ere it escapes us.
Come—fill the smiling goblet for the king;
Belshazzar will not let a moment pass
Unmark'd by some enjoyment! The full bowl
Let every guest partake!
[*Courtiers kneel and drink.*

1st cour. Here's to the king!
Light of the world, and glory of the earth,
Whose word is fate!

Bel. Yes; we are likest gods
When we have pow'r, and use it. What is wealth
But the rich means to gratify desire?
I will not have a wish, a hope, a thought,
That shall not know fruition. What is empire?
The privilege to punish and enjoy:
To feel our pow'r in making others fear it;
To taste of Pleasure's cup till we grow giddy,
And think ourselves immortal! This is empire!
My ancestors scarce tasted of its joys:
Shut from the sprightly world, and all its charms,
In cumbrous majesty, in sullen state
And dull unsocial dignity they liv'd;
Far from the sight of an admiring world,
That world, whose gaze makes half the charms of greatness;
They nothing knew of empire but the name,
Or saw it in the looks of trembling slaves;
And all they felt of royalty was care.
But I will see, and know it of myself;
Youth, Wealth, and Greatness court me to be blest,
And Pow'r and Pleasure draw with equal force
And sweet attraction · both I will embrace
In quick succession; this is Pleasure's day;
Ambition will have time to reign hereafter;
It is the proper appetite of age.
The lust of pow'r shall lord it uncontroll'd,
When all the gen'rous feelings grow obtuse,
And stern Dominion holds, with rigid hand,
His iron rein, and sits and sways alone.
But youth is Pleasure's hour!

1st cour. Perish the slave
Who, with official counsel would oppose
The king's desire, whose slightest wish is law!

Bel. Now strike the loud-ton'd lyre and softer lute;
Let me have music, with the nobler aid
Of poesy. Where are those cunning men
Who boast, by chosen sounds, and measur'd sweetness,
To set the busy spirits in a flame,
And cool them at their will? who know the art
To call the hidden powers of numbers forth,
And make that pliant instrument, the mind,
Yield to the pow'rful sympathy of sound,
Obedient to the master's artful hand,
Such magic is song! Then give me song;
Yet not at first such soul dissolving strains
As melt the soften'd sense; but such bold measures
As may inflame my spirit to despise
Th' ambitious Persian, that presumptuous boy,
Who rashly dares e'en now invest our city,
And menaces th' invincible Belshazzar.
[*A grand concert of music, after which an ode.*]

In vain shall Persian Cyrus dare
With great Belshazzar wage unequal war:
In vain Darius shall combine,
Darius leader of the Median line;
While fair Euphrates' stream our walls protects,
And great Belshazzar's self our fate directs.
War and famine threat in vain,
While this demi-god shall reign!
Let Persia's prostrate king confess his pow'r,
And Media's monarch dread his vengeful hour.
On Dura's* ample plain behold
Immortal Belus,† whom the nations own;
Sublime he stands in burnish'd gold,
And richest offerings his bright altars crown.
To-night his deity we here adore,
And due libations speak his mighty pow'r.
Yet Belus' self not more we own
Than great Belshazzar on Chaldea's throne.
Great Belshazzar like a God,
Rules the nations with a nod!
To great Belshazzar be the goblet crown'd!
Belshazzar's name the echoing roofs rebound!

Belsh. Enough! the kindling rapture fires my brain,
And my heart dances to the flattering sounds,
I feel myself a god! Why not a god!
What were the deities our fathers worship'd?
What was great Nimrod our imperial founder?
What greater Belus, to whose pow'r divine
We raise to-night the banquet and the song
But youthful heroes, mortal, like myself,
Who by their daring earn'd divinity?
They were but men: nay some were less than men,
Though now rever'd as gods. What was Anubis,
Whom Egypt's sapient sons adore? A dog!
And shall not I, young, valiant, and a king,
Dare more? do more? exceed the boldest flights
Of my progenitors?—Fill me more wine,
To cherish and exalt the young idea. (*he drinks*)
Ne'er did Olympian Jupiter himself
Quaff such immortal draughts.

1st cour. What could that Canaan,
That heaven in hope, that nothing in possession,
That air-built bliss of the deluded Jews,
That promis'd land of milk and flowing honey,
What could that fancy'd Paradise bestow
To match these generous juices?

Belsh. Hold—enough!
Thou hast rous'd a thought. By Heav'n I will enjoy it:
A glorious thought! which will exalt to rapture
The pleasure of the banquet, and bestow
A yet untasted relish of delight.

1st cour. What means the king?

Belsh. The Jews! said'st thou the Jews!

1st cour. I spoke of that undone, that outcast people,
Those tributary creatures of thy pow'r,
The captives of thy will, whose very breath
Hangs on the sovereign pleasure of the king.

Belsh. When that abandoned race was hither brought,

* Daniel, chap iii.

† See a very fine description of the temple of this idol.

——————The tow'ring fane
Of Bel, Chaldean Jove, surpassing far
That Doric temple, which the Elean chiefs
Rais'd to their thunderer from the spoils of war,
Or that Ionic, where th' Ephesian bow'd
To Dian, queen of heaven. Eight towers arise,
Each above each, immeasurable height,
A monument at once of eastern pride,
And slavish superstition, &c.

Judah Restored, b. I.

Were not the choicest treasures of their temple,
(Devoted to their God, and held most precious)
Among the spoils which grac'd Nebassar's* triumphs,
And lodg'd in Babylon?

1st cour. O king! they were.

2d cour. The Jews, with superstitious awe, behold
These sacred symbols of their ancient faith:
Nor has captivity abated aught
The rev'rend love they bear these holy reliques.
Though we deride their law, and scorn their persons,
Yet never have we yet to human use
Devoted these rich vessels set apart
To sacred purposes.

Belsh. I joy to hear it!
Go—fetch them hither. They shall grace our banquet.
Does no one stir? Belshazzar disobey'd?
And yet you live? Whence comes this strange reluctance?
This new-born rev'rence for the helpless Jews?
This fear to injure those who can't revenge it?
Send to the sacred treasury in haste,
Let all be hither brought;—who answers dies.

[*They go out.*

The mantling wine a higher joy will yield,
Pour'd from the precious flaggons which adorn'd
Their far-fam'd temple, now in ashes laid.
Oh! 'twill exalt the pleasure into transport,
To gall those whining, praying Israelites!
I laugh to think what wild dismay will seize them
When they shall learn the use that has been made
Of all their holy trumpery!

[*The vessels are brought in.*

2d cour. It comes;
A goodly show! how bright with gold and gems!
Far fitter for a youthful monarch's board
Than the cold shrine of an unheeding God.

Belsh. Fill me that massy goblet to the brim.
Now, Abraham! let thy wretched race expect
The fable of their faith to be fulfill'd;
Their second temple and their promis'd king!
Now will they see the god they vainly serve
Is impotent to help; for had he pow'r
To hear and grant their pray'r, he would prevent
This profanation.

[*As the king is going to drink, thunder is heard: he starts from the throne, spies a hand, which writes on the wall these words,* MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. *He lets fall the goblet, and stands in an attitude of speechless horror. All start and seem terrified.*]

1st cour. (*after a long pause.* Oh, transcendant horror!

2d cour. What may this mean? The king is greatly mov'd!

3d cour. Nor is it strange—who unappall'd can view it?
Those sacred cups! I doubt we 've gone too far!

1st cour. Observe the fear-struck king! his starting eyes
Roll horribly. Thrice he essay'd to speak,
And thrice his tongue refus'd.

Belsh. (*in a low trembling voice.*) Ye mystic words!
Thou semblance of an hand! illusive forms!
Ye wild fantastic images, what are ye?
Dread shadows, speak! Explain your dark intent!
Ye will not answer me—Alas! I feel
I am a mortal now—My failing limbs
Refuse to bear me up. I am no god!
Gods do not tremble thus—Support me, hold me:
These loosen'd joints, these knees which smite each other,
Betray I'm but a man—a weak one too!

1st cour. In truth, 'tis passing strange, and full of horror!

Belsh. Send for the learn'd magicians, every sage
Who deals in wizard spells and magic charms.

[*Some go out.*

1st court. How fares my lord the king?

Besh. Am I a king?
What pow'r have I? Ye lying slaves, I am not.
Oh, soul distracting sight! but is it real?
Perhaps 'tis fancy all, or the wild dream
Of mad distemperature, the fumes of wine!
I'll look on it no more!—So—now I'm well!
I am a king again, and know not fear.
And yet my eyes will seek that fatal spot,
And fondly dwell upon the sight that blast them!
Again, 'tis there! it is not fancy's work,
I see it still! 'tis written on the wall!
I see the writing, but the viewless writer,
Who! what is he! Oh, horror! horror! horror!
It cannot be the God of these poor Jews;
For what is He, that he can thus afflict?

2d cour. Let not my Lord the king be thus dismay'd.

3d cour. Let not a phantom, an illusive shade
Disturb the peace of him who rules the world.

Belsh. No more, ye wretched sycophants! no more!
The sweetest note which flatt'ry now can strike,
Harsh and discordant grates upon my soul.
Talk not of pow'r to one so full of fear,
So weak, so impotent! Look on that wall;
If thou wouldst soothe my soul explain the writing,
And thou shalt be my oracle, my God!
O tell me whence it came, and what it means,
And I'll believe I am again a king!
Friends! princes! ease my troubled breast, and say
What do the mystic characters portend?

1st court. 'Tis not in us, O king, to ease thy spirit;
We are not skill'd in those mysterious arts
Which wait the midnight studies of the sage:
But of the deep diviners thou shalt learn,
The wise astrologers, the sage magicians,
Who, of events unborn, take secret note,
And hold deep commerce with the unseen world.

Enter astologers, magicians, &c. &c.

Belsh. Approach, ye sages, 'tis the king commands.

[*They kneel.*

Astrologers. Hail, mighty king of Babylon!

Belsh. Nay, rise:

* The name of Nebuchadnezzar not being reducible to verse, I have adopted that of Nebassar, on the authority of the ingenious and learned Author of 'Judah Restored.'

I do not need your homage, but your help;
The world may worship, you must counsel me.
He who declares the secret of the king,
No common honours shall await his skill;
Our empire shall be tax'd for his reward,
And he himself shall name the gift he wishes.
A splendid scarlet robe shall grace his limbs,
His neck a princely chain of gold adorn:
Meet honours for such wisdom: He shall rule
The third in rank throughout our Babylon.

2d Astr. Such recompence becomes Belshazzar's bounty;
Let the king speak the secret of his soul;
Which heard, his humble creatures shall unfold.

Belsh. (*points to the wall.*) Be 't so—look there—behold those characters!
Nay, do not start, for I will know their meaning!
Ha! answer; speak, or instant death awaits you!
What, dumb! all dumb! where is your boasted skill? [*They confer together.*
Keep them asunder—no confederacy——
No secret plots to make your tales agree,
Speak, slaves, and dare to let me know the worst! [*They kneel.*

1st Astr. O, let the king forgive his faithful servants!

2d Astr. O mitigate our threatened doom of death;
If we declare, with mingled grief and shame,
We cannot tell the secret of the king,
Nor what these mystic characters portend!

Belsh. Off with their heads! Ye shall not live an hour!
Curse on your shallow arts, your lying science!
'Tis thus you practice on the credulous world,
Who think you wise because themselves are weak!
But miscreants, ye shall die! the pow'r to punish
Is all that I have left me of a king.

1st cour. Great sire, suspend their punishment a while;
Behold Nitocris comes, thy royal mother!

Enter QUEEN.

Queen. O my misguided son!
Well may'st thou wonder to behold me here:
For I have ever shunn'd this scene of riot,
Where wild intemperance and dishonour'd mirth
Hold festival impure. Yet, O Belshazzar!
I could not hear the wonders which befel,
And leave thee to the workings of despair:
For, spite of all the anguish of my soul
At thy offences, I'm thy mother still!
Against the solemn purpose I had form'd
Never to mix in this unhallow'd crowd,
The wondrous story of the mystic writing,
Of strange and awful import, brings me here;
If hap'ly I may show some likely means
To fathom this dark mystery.

Bel. Speak, O queen!
My list'ning soul shall hang upon thy words,
And prompt obedience follow them!

Queen. Then hear me.
Among thy captive tribes which hither came
To grace Nebassar's triumph, there was brought
A youth nam'd Daniel, favour'd by high Heav'n
With pow'r to look into the secret page
Of dim Futurity's mysterious volume.
The spirit of the holy gods is in *him:*
No vision so obscure, so deeply hid,
No sentence so perplex'd but he can solve it:
He can unfold the dark decrees of fate,
Can trace each crooked labyrinth of thought,
Each winding maze of doubt, and make it clear
And palpable to sense. He twice explain'd
The monarch's mystic dreams. The holy seer
Saw, with prophetic spirit, what befel
The king long after. For his wond'rous skill
He was rewarded, honour'd, and caress'd,
And with the rulers of Chaldea rank'd:
Though now, alas! thrown by, his services
Forgotten or neglected.

Bel. Send with speed
A message to command the holy man
To meet us on the instant.

Nitocris. I already
Have sent to ask his presence at the palace,
And lo! in happy season see he comes.

Enter Daniel.

Bel. Welcome, thrice venerable sage! approach.
Art thou that Daniel whom my great forefather
Brought hither with the captive tribes of Judah!

Daniel. I am, O king!

Bel. Then, pardon, holy prophet;
Nor let a just resentment of thy wrongs,
And long neglected merit, shut thy heart
Against a king's request, a suppliant king!

Daniel. The God I worship teaches to forgive.

Bel. Then let thy words bring comfort to my soul.
I've heard the spirit of the gods is in thee;
That thou can'st look into the fates of men,
With prescience more than human!

Daniel. Hold, O king!
Wisdom is from above; 'tis God's own gift,
I of myself am nothing; but from Him
The little knowledge I possess, I hold:
To him be all the glory!

Bel. Then, O Daniel!
If thou indeed dost boast that wond'rous gift,
That faculty divine; look there, and tell me!
O say, what mean those mystic characters?
Remove this load of terror from my soul,
And honours, such as kings can give, await thee.
Thou shalt be great beyond thy soul's ambition,
And rich above thy wildest dream of wealth:
Clad in the scarlet robe our nobles wear,
And grac'd with princely ensigns thou shalt stand
Near our own throne, and third within our empire.

Daniel. O mighty king, thy gifts with thee remain
And let thy high rewards on others fall.
The princely ensign, nor the scarlet robe,
Nor yet to be the third within thy realm,
Can touch the soul of Daniel. Honour, fame,
All that the world calls great, thy crown itself,
Could never satisfy the vast ambition
Of an immortal spirit; I aspire
Beyond thy pow'r of giving; my high hopes
Reach also to a crown—but 'tis a crown
Unfading and eternal.

1st cour. Wond'rous man!

Our priests teach no such notions.
Daniel. Yet, O king!
Though all unmov'd by grandeur or by gift,
I will unfold the high decree of Heaven,
And straight declare the mystery.
Bel. Speak, O prophet!
Daniel. Prepare to hear what kings have seldom heard;
Prepare to hear what courtiers seldom tell,
Prepare to hear the Truth. The mighty God,
Who rules the sceptres and the hearts of kings,
Gave thy renown'd forefather* here to reign,
With such extent of empire, weight of pow'r,
And greatness of dominion, the wide earth
Trembled beneath the terror of his name,
And kingdoms stood or fell as he decreed.
Oh! dangerous pinnacle of pow'r supreme!
Who can stand safe upon its treach'rous top,
Behold the gazing prostrate world below,
Whom depth and distance into pigmies shrink,
And not grow giddy! Babylon's great king
Forgot he was a man, a helpless man,
Subject to pain, and sin, and death, like others!
But who shall fight against Omnipotence?
Or who hath harden'd his obdurate heart
Against the Majesty of Heav'n, and prosper'd?
The God he hath insulted was aveng'd;
From empire, from the joys of social life,
He drove him forth; extinguish'd reason's lamp;
Quench'd that bright spark of deity within;
Compell'd him with the forest brutes to roam
For scanty pasture; and the mountain dews
Fell, cold and wet, on his defenceless head,
Till he confess'd,—Let men, let monarchs hear!
Till he confess'd, PRIDE WAS NOT MADE FOR MAN.
Nicotris. O awful instance of divine displeasure!
Bel. Proceed! my soul is wrapt in fix'd attention!
Daniel. O king! thy grandsire not in vain had sinn'd,
If, from his error thou hadst learnt the truth.
The story of his fall thou oft has heard,
But has it taught thee wisdom? Thou like him,
Hast been elate with pow'r, and mad with pride,
Like him, thou hast defy'd the living God.
Nay, to bold thoughts hast added deeds more bold.
Thou hast outwrought the pattern he bequeath'd thee,
And quite outgone example; hast profan'd
With impious hand, the vessels of the temple:
Those vessels sanctify'd to holiest use,
Thou hast polluted with unhallow'd lips,
And made the instruments of foul debauch,
Thou hast ador'd the gods of wood and stone,
Vile, senseless deities, the work of hands:
But HE, THE KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS,
In whom exists thy life, thy soul, thy breath,
On whom thy being hangs, thou hast deny'd.
1st cour. (*aside to the others.*) With what an holy boldness he reproves him!
2d cour. Such is the fearless confidence of virtue!
And such the righteous courage those maintain
Who plead the cause of truth. The smallest word
He utters had been death to half the court.

* Nebuchadnezzar.

Bel. Now let the mystic writing be explain'd,
Thrice venerable sage!
Daniel. O mighty king!
Hear then its awful import: *Heav'n has number'd*
Thy days of royalty, and *soon will end them.*
Our God has weigh'd thee in the even balance
Of his own holy law, and *finds thee wanting:*
And last *thy kingdom shall be wrested from thee.*
And know, *the Mede and Persian shall possess it.*
Bel. (*starts up.*) Prophet, when shall this be?
Daniel. In God's own time;
Here my commission ends; I may not utter
More than thou'st heard; but oh! remember king!
Thy days are number'd: hear, repent and live!
Bel. Say, prophet, what can penitence avail?
If Heaven's decrees immutably are fix'd,
Can pray'rs avert our fate?
Daniel. They change our hearts,
And thus dispose Omnipotence to mercy.
'Tis man that alters; God is still the same.
Conditional are all Heav'n's covenants:
And when th' uplifted thunder is withheld,
'Tis pray'r that deprecates th' impending bolt.
Good Hezekiah's* days were number'd too;
But penitence and faith were mighty pleas:
At Mercy's throne they never plead in vain.
[*He is going.*
Bel. Stay, prophet, and receive thy promis'd gift;
The scarlet robe and princely chain are thine.
And let my herald publish through the land
That Daniel stands, in dignity and pow'r,
The third in Babylon. These just rewards
Thou well may'st claim, though sad thy prophecy!
Queen. Be not deceiv'd my son! nor let thy soul
Snatch an uncertain moment's treach'rous rest,
On the dread brink of that tremendous gulf
Which yawns beneath thee.
Daniel. O unhappy king,
Know what *must* happen once *may* happen soon.
Remember that 'tis terrible to meet
Great evils unprepar'd! and, O Belshazzar!
In the wild moment of dismay and death,
Remember thou wast warn'd! and, O remember,
Warnings despis'd are condemnations then.
[*Exeunt Daniel and Queen.*
Bel. 'Tis well—my soul shakes off its load of care:
'Tis only the obscure is terrible.
Imagination frames events unknown,
In wild fantastic shapes of hideous ruin,
And what it fears creates!—I know the worst;
And awful is that worst as fear could feign:
But distant are the ills I have to dread!
What is remote may be uncertain too!—
Ha! princes! hope breaks in!—This may not be.
1st cour. Perhaps this Daniel is in league with Persia;
And brib'd by Cyrus to report these horrors,
To weaken and impede the mighty plans
Of thy imperial mind.
Bel. 'Tis very like.
2d cour. Return we to the banquet.
Bel. Dare we venture?

* 2 Chron. chap xxxiii. Isaiah, chap. xxxviii.

3d. cour. Let not this dreaming seer disturb the king.
Against the pow'r of Cyrus and the Mede
Is Babylon secure. Her brazen gates
Mock all attempts to force them. Proud Euphrates,
A wat'ry bulwark, guards our ample city
From all assailants. And within the walls
Of this stupendous capital are lodg'd
Such vast provisions, such exhaustless stores,
As a twice ten years siege could never waste.

Bel. (*embraces him.*) My better genius! Safe in such resources,
I mock the prophet.—Turn me to the banquet!

[*As they are going to resume their places at the banquet, a dreadful uproar is heard, tumultuous cries, and warlike sounds. All stand terrified. Enter soldiers with their swords drawn and wounded.*]

Soldier. Oh, helpless Babylon! Oh, wretched king!
Chaldea is no more, the Mede has conquer'd!
The victor Cyrus, like a mighty torrent
Comes rushing on, and marks his way with ruin!
Destruction is at hand; escape or perish.

Bel. Impossible! Villain and slave thou ly'st!
Euphrates and the brazen gates secure us.
While those remain, Belshazzar laughs at danger.

Soldier. Euphrates is diverted from its course;
The brazen gates are burst, the city 's taken;
Thyself a pris'ner, and thy empire lost.

Bel. Oh, prophet! I remember thee indeed!

[*He runs out. They follow in the utmost confusion.*]

Enter several Jews, Medes, and Babylonians.

1st Jew. He comes, he comes! the long predicted prince,
Cyrus, the destin'd instrument of Heaven,
To free our captive nation, and restore
JEHOVAH's temple. Carnage marks his way,
And Conquest sits upon his plume crown'd helm.

2d Jew. What noise is that?

1st Jew. Hark! 'tis Belshazzar's voice!

Bel. (*without.*) O soldier, spare my life, and aid my flight!
Such treasures shall reward the gentle deed
As Persia never saw. I 'll be thy slave;
I 'll yield my crown to Cyrus; I'll adore
His gods and thine—I 'll kneel and kiss thy feet,
And worship thee.—It is not much I ask—
I 'll live in bondage, beggary and pain,
So thou but let me live.

Soldier. Die, tyrant, die!

Bel. O Daniel! Daniel! Daniel!

Enter Soldier.

Soldier. Belshazzar 's dead!
The wretched king breath'd out his furious soul
In that tremendous groan.

1st Jew. Belshazzar's dead!
Then, Judah, art thou free! The tyrant's fallen!
Jerusalem, Jerusalem is free!

PART III.

Enter DANIEL *and Jews.*

Dan. Bel boweth down,* and haughty Nebo stoops!
The idols fall; the god and worshipper
Together fall! together they bow down!
Each other, or themselves they cannot save.
O, Babylon, where is thy refuge now?
Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, meant to save,
Pervert thee; and thy blessing is thy bane!
Where are thy brutish deities, Chaldea?
Where are thy gods of gold?—Oh, Lord of life!
Thou very God! so fall thy foes before thee!

1st Jew. So fell beneath the terrors of Thy name
The idol Chemosh, Moab's empty trust;
So Ammonitish Moloch sunk before Thee;
So fell Philistine Dagon: so shall fall,
To time's remotest period, all thy foes,
Triumphant Lord of Hosts!

Daniel. How chang'd our fate!
Not for myself, O Judah! but for thee
I shed these tears of joy. For I no more
Must view the cedars which adorn the brow
Of Syrian Lebanon; no more shall see
Thy pleasant stream, O Jordan! nor the flocks
Which whiten all the mountains of Judea;
No more these eyes delighted shall review
Or Carmel's heights, or Sharon's flow'ry vales.
I must remain in Babylon! So Heav'n,
To whose awards I bow me, has decreed.
I ne'er shall see thee, Salem! I am old;
And few and toilsome are my days to come.
But we shall meet in those celestial climes,
Compar'd with which created glories sink;
Where sinners shall have pow'r to harm no more,
And martyr'd Virtue rests her weary head.
Though ere my day of promis'd grace shall come,
I shall be tried by perils strange and new;
Nor shall I taste of death, so have I learn'd,
Till I have seen the captive tribes restor'd.

1st Jew. And shall we view, once more, thy hallow'd towers,
Imperial Salem?

Dan. Yes, my youthful friends!
You shall behold the second temple rise,†
With grateful ecstacy; but we, your sires,
Now bent with hoary age; we, whose charm'd eyes
Beheld the matchless glories of the first,
Should weep, rememb'ring that we once had seen
That model of perfection!

2d Jew. Never more
Shall such a wond'rous structure grace the earth!

Dan. Well have you borne affliction, men of Judah!
Well have sustain'd your portion of distress:
And, unrepining, drank the bitter dregs
Of adverse fortune! Happier days await you.
O guard against the perils of success!
Prosperity dissolves the yielding soul,
And the bright sun of shining fortune melts
The firmest virtue down. Beware my friends,
Be greatly cautious of prosperity!
Defend your sliding hearts; and, trembling, think
How those, who buffetted Affliction's waves

* Isaiah, chap. xlvi. † Ezra, chap. i.

With vig'rous virtue, sunk in Pleasure's calm.
He,* who of special grace had been allow'd
To rear the hallow'd fane to Israel's God,
By wealth corrupted, and by ease debauch'd,
Forsook the God to whom he rais'd the fane;
And, sunk in sensual sloth, consum'd his days
In vile idolatrous rites,—Nor think, my sons,
That virtue in sequester'd *solitude*
Is always found. Within the inmost soul
The hidden tempter lurks; nor less betrays
In the still seeming safety of retreat,
Than where the world her snares entangling spreads,
More visible to sense. Guard every thought:
Who thinks himself secure is half undone;
For Sin, unwatch'd, may reach the sanctuary:
'Tis not the place preserves us. Righteous Lot
Stem'd the strong current of Corruption's tide,
E'en in polluted Sodom; safe he liv'd,
While circumspective Virtue's watchful eye
Was anxiously awake: but in the shade,
Far from the obvious perils which alarm
With palpable temptation, secret sin
Ensnar'd his soul; he trusted in himself;
Security betray'd him, and he fell.

2d. Jew. Thy prudent counsels in our hearts shall live,
As if a pen of adamant had grav'd them.

1st Jew. The dawn approaches; let us part, my friend,
Secure of peace, since tyranny is fallen.

Dan. So perish all thine enemies, O Lord;
So mighty God, shall perish all who seek
Corrupted pleasures in the turbid waves
Of life's polluted stream, and madly quit
The living fountain of perennial grace!

* Solomon.

DANIEL:

A SACRED DRAMA.

The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.
Proverbs of Solomon.

On peut des plus grands rois surprendre la justice.
Incapable de tromper,
Ils out peine a s'echapper
Des pieges de l'artifice.
Un cœur noble ne peut soupconner en autrui
La bassesse et la malice
Qu'il ne sent point en lui.
Esther. Tragedie de Racine.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

DARIUS, king of Media and Babylon.
PHARNACES, SORANUS, courtiers, enemies to Daniel.
ARASPES, a young Median lord, friend and convert to Daniel.
DANIEL.

Scene—The city of Babylon.

The subject is taken from the sixth chapter of the prophet Daniel.

PART I.

PHARNACES, SORANUS.

Phar. YES!—I have noted with a jealous eye,
The pow'r of this new fav'rite! Daniel reigns,
And not Darius! Daniel guides the springs
Which move this mighty empire. High he sits,
Supreme in favour with both prince and people.
Where is the spirit of our Median lords,
Tamely to crouch and bend the supple knee
To this new god! By Mithras, 'tis too much!
Shall great Arbaces' race to Daniel bow!
A foreigner, a captive, and a Jew?
Something must be devis'd, and that right soon,
To shake his credit.

Sor. Rather hope to shake
The mountain pine, whose twisting fibres clasp
The earth, deep rooted! Rather hope to shake
The Scythian Taurus from his central base!
No—Daniel sits too absolute in pow'r,
Too firm in favour, for the keenest shaft
Of nicely-aiming jealousy to reach him.

Phar. Rather he sits too high to sit securely,
Yes! he has reach'd that pinnacle of pow'r
Which closely touches on depression's verge.
Hast thou then liv'd in courts? hast thou grown gray
Beneath the mask a subtle statesman wears,
To hide his secret soul, and dost not know
That of all fickle Fortune's transient gifts,
Favour is most deceitful? 'Tis a beam,
Which darts uncertain brightness for a moment!
The faint precarious, fickly shine of pow'r;
Giv'n without merit, by caprice withdrawn.
No trifle is so small as what obtains,
Save that which loses favour, 'tis a breath,
Which hangs upon a smile! A look, a word,

A frown, the air-built tower of fortune shakes,
And down the unsubstantial fabric falls!
Darius, just and clement as he is,
If I mistake not, may be wrought upon
By prudent wiles, by Flatt'ry's pleasant cup,
Administer'd with caution.

Sor. But the means?
For Daniel's life (a foe must grant him that)
Is so replete with goodness, so adorn'd
With every virtue so exactly squar'd
By wisdom's nicest rules, 'twill be most hard
To charge him with the shadow of offence.
Pure is his fame as Scythia's mountain snows,
When not a breath pollutes them! O Pharnaces,
I've scann'd the actions of his daily life
With all th' industrious malice of a foe;
And nothing meets mine eye but deeds of honour!
In office pure; for equitable acts
Renown'd: in justic and impartial truth,
The Grecian Themis is not more severe.

Phar. By yon bright sun, thou blazon'st forth his praise
As if with rapture thou did'st read the page
Where these fair deeds are written!

Sor. Thou mistak'st
I only meant to show what cause we have
To hate and fear him. I but meant to paint
His popular virtues and eclipsing merit
Then for devotion and religious zeal,
Who so renown'd as Daniel? Of his law
Observant in th' extreme. Thrice ev'ry day
With prostrate reverence, he adores his God:
With superstitious awe his face he turns
Tow'rds his belov'd Jerusalem, as if
Some local, partial God, might there be found
To hear his supplication. No affair
Of state, no business so importunate,
No pleasure so alluring, no employ
Of such high import, to seduce his zeal
From this observance due!

Phar. There, there he falls!
Enough my friend! His piety destroys him.
There, at the very footstool of his God,
Where he implores protection, there I'll crush him.

Sor. What means Pharnaces?

Phar. Ask not what I mean,
The new idea floating in my brain
Has yet receiv'd no form. 'Tis yet too soon
To give it body, circumstance, or breath.
The seeds of mighty deeds are lab'ring here,
And struggling for a birth! 'Tis near the hour
The king is wont to summon us to council:
Ere that, this big conception of my mind
I'll shape to form and being. Thou, meanwhile,
Convene our chosen friends: for I shall need
The aid of all your councils, and the weight
of grave authority.

Sor. Who shall be trusted?

Phar. With our immediate motive none, except
A chosen band of friends, who most repine
At Daniel's exaltation.—But the scheme
I meditate must be disclos'd to all
Who bear high office; all our Median rulers,
Princes and captains, presidents and lords;
All must assemble. 'Tis a common cause:
All but the young Araspes: he inclines
To Daniel and his God. He sits attent,
With ravish'd ears, to listen to his lore.
With rev'rence names Jerusalem, and reads
The volume of the law. No more he bows
To hail the golden Ruler of the Day,
But looks for some great Prophet, greater far,
So they pretend, than Mithras! From him therefore,
Conceal whate'er of injury is devis'd
'Gainst Daniel. Be it to thy care to-day
To keep him from the council.

Sor. 'Tis well thought.
'Tis now about the hour of Daniel's prayer:
Araspes too is with him! and to day
They will not sit in council. Haste we then
Designs of high importance, once conceiv'd
Should be accomplish'd! Genius which discerns,
And courage which achieves, despise the aid
Of ling'ring Circumspection! The keen spirit
Seizes the prompt occasion, makes the thought
Start into instant action, and at once
Plans and performs, resolves and executes!

PART II.

Scene—Daniel's house.

DANIEL, ARASPES.

Araspes. PROCEED, proceed, thrice venerable sage,
Enlighten my dark mind with this new ray,
This dawning of salvation! Tell me more
Of this expected King! this Comforter!
This Promise of the nations! this great Hope
Of anxious Israel! This unborn Prophet!
This wonderful, this mighty Counsellor!
This everlasting Lord! this Prince of Peace!
This balm of Gilead, which shall heal the wounds
Of universal nature! this Messiah!
Redeemer, Saviour, Sufferer, Victim, God!

Dan. Enough to animate our faith, we know,
But not enough to soothe the curious pride
Of vain philosophy! Enough to cheer
Our path we see, the rest is hid in clouds;
And heaven's own shadows rest upon the view!

Aras. Go on blest sage! I could for ever hear
Untir'd, thy admonition! tell me how
I shall obtain the favour of that God
I but begin to know, but fain would serve.

Dan. By deep humility, by faith unfeign'd,
By holy deeds, best proof of living faith!
O Faith,* thou wonder-working principle,
Eternal substance of our present hope,
Thou evidence of things invisible!
What cannot man sustain, sustain'd by thee!
The time would fail, and the bright star of day
Would quench his beams in ocean, and resign
His empire to the silver queen of night;
And she again descend the steep of heaven,
If I should tell what wonders Faith achiev'd
By Gideon, Barak, and the holy seer,
Elkanah's son; the pious Gileadite,
Ill-fated Jephthah! He of Zorah too†
In strength unequall'd; and the shepherd-king,
Who vanquish'd Gath's fell giant! Need I tell
Of holy prophets, who by conqu'ring Faith,

* Hebrews, chap. xi. † Samson.

Wrought deeds incredible to mortal sense;
Vanquish'd contending kingdoms, quell'd the rage
Of furious pestilence, extinguish'd fire!
Victorious Faith! others by thee endur'd
Exile, disgrace, captivity, and death!
Some uncomplaining, bore (nor be it deem'd
The meanest exercise of well-try'd Faith)
The cruel mocking, and the bitter taunt,
Foul obloquy, and undeserv'd reproach:
Despising shame, that death to human pride!

Aras. How shall this faith be sought?

Dan. By earnest prayer,
Solicit first the wisdom from above:
Wisdom, whose fruits are purity and peace!
Wisdom! that bright intelligence, which sat
Supreme, when with his golden compasses*
Th' Eternal plann'd the fabric of the world,
Produc'd his fair idea into light,
And said, that all was good! Wisdom, blest beam!
The brightness of the everlasting light!
The spotless mirror of the power of God!
The reflex image of th' all perfect Mind!
A stream translucent, flowing from the source
Of glory infinite! a cloudless light!
Defilement cannot touch nor sin pollute
Her unstain'd purity! Not Ophir's gold,
Nor Ethiopia's gems can match her price!
The ruby of the mine is pale before her!
And, like the oil Elisha's bounty bless'd,
She is a treasure which doth grow by use,
And multiply by spending! She contains,
Within herself the sum of excellence.
If riches are desir'd, wisdom is wealth!
If prudence, where shall keen Invention find
Artificer more cunning? If renown,
In her right hand it comes! If piety,
Are not her labours virtues? If the lore
Which sage Experience teaches, lo! she scans
Antiquity's dark truths; the past she knows,
Anticipates the future; not by arts
Forbidden, of Chaldean sorcerer,
But from the piercing ken of deep Foreknowledge.
From her sure science of the human heart
She weighs effects with causes, ends with means;
Resolving all into the sovereign will.
For earthly blessings moderate be thy pray'r
And qualified; for light, for strength, for grace,
Unbounded thy petition.

Aras. Now, O prophet!
Explain the secret doubts which rack my mind,
And my weak sense confound. Give me some line
To sound the depths of Providence! O say,
Why the ungodly prosper? why their root
Shoots deep, and their thick branches flourish fair,
Like the green bay tree? why the righteous man,
Like tender plants to shiv'ring winds expos'd,
Is strip'd and torn, in naked Virtue bare,
And nipp'd by cruel Sorrow's biting blast?
Explain, O Daniel, these mysterious ways
To my faint apprehension! For as yet
I've much to learn. Fair Truth's immortal sun
Is sometimes hid in clouds; not that her light
Is in itself defective; but obscur'd
By my weak prejudice, imperfect Faith,
And all the thousand causes which obstruct
The growth of goodness.

Dan. Follow me, Araspes.
Within thou shalt peruse the sacred page,
The book of life eternal! *that* will show thee
The end of the ungodly; thou wilt own
How short their longest period; wilt perceive
How black a night succeeds their brightest day!
Thy purged eye will see God is not slack,
As men count slackness, to fulfil his word.
Weigh well this book; and may the Spirit of grace,
Who stamp'd the seal of truth on the bless'd page,
Descend into thy soul, remove thy doubts,
Clear the perplex'd, and solve the intricate,
Till faith be lost in sight, and hope in joy!

PART III.

DARIUS *on his throne*—PHARNACES, SORANUS *princes, presidents, and courtiers.*

Pharn. Hail! king Darius, live for ever!

Darius. Welcome!
Welcome my princes, presidents, and friends!
Now tell me, has your wisdom aught devis'd
To aid the commonwealth? In our new empire,
Subdu'd Chaldea, is there aught remains
Your prudence can suggest to serve the state,
To benefit the subject, to redress
And raise the injur'd, to assist the oppress'd,
And humble the oppressor? If you know,
Speak freely, princes! Why am I a king,
Except to poise the awful scale of justice
With even hand; to minister to want;
To bless the nations with a lib'ral rule,
Vicegerant of th' eternal Oromasdes?

Phar. So absolute thy wisdom, mighty king,
All counsel were superfluous.

Darius. Hold, Pharnaces!
No adulation; 'tis the death of virtue;
Who flatters is of all mankind the lowest,
Save he who courts flattery. Kings are men,
As feeble and as frail as those they rule,
And born like them, to die. The Lydian monarch,
Unhappy Crœsus, lately sat aloft,
Almost above mortality; now see him!
Sunk to the vile condition of a slave,
He swells the train of Cyrus! I, like him,
To misery am obnoxious. See this throne;
This royal throne the great Nebassar fill'd;
Yet hence his pride expell'd him! Yonder wall,
The dread terrific writing to the eyes
Of proud Belshazzar show'd; sad monuments
Of Heav'n's tremendous vengeance! and shall I,
Unwarn'd by such examples, cherish pride?
Yet to their dire calamities I owe
The brightest gem that glistens in my crown,
Sage Daniel. If my speech have aught of worth,
Or if my life with aught of good be grac'd,
To him alone I owe it.

Soranus (*aside to Pharnaces.*) Now Pharnaces,
Will he run o'er and dwell upon his praise,

* See Paradise Lost, book vii. line 225. Proverbs, chap viii. ver. 27.

As if we ne'er had heard it; nay, will swell
The nauseous catalogue with many a virtue
His own fond fancy coins.

Phar. O, great Darius!
Let thine unworthy servant's words find grace,
And meet acceptance in his royal ear,
Who subjugates the east! Let not the king
With anger hear my pray'r.

Darius. Pharnaces, speak;
I know thou lov'st me; I but meant to chide
Thy flatt'ry, not reprove thee for thy zeal.
Speak boldly, friends, as man should speak to man.
Perish the barb'rous maxims of the east,
Which basely would enslave the free-born mind,
And plunder man of the best gift of Heav'n,
His liberty of soul.

Phar. Darius! hear me.
Thy princes, and the captains of thy bands,
Thy presidents, the nobles who bear rule
O'er provinces, and I, thine humble creature.
Less than the least in merit, but in love,
In zeal, and duty, equal with the first,
We have devis'd a measure to confirm
Thy infant empire, to establish firmly
Thy pow'r and new dominion, and secure
Thy growing greatness past the pow'r of change.

Darius. I am prepar'd to hear thee. Speak Pharnaces.

Phar. The wretched Babylonians long have groan'd
Beneath the rule of princes, weak or rash.
The rod of pow'r was sway'd alike amiss,
By feeble Merodach and fierce Belshazzar.
One let the slacken'd reins too loosely float
Upon the people's neck, and lost his pow'r
By nerveless relaxation. He, who follow'd,
Held with a tyrant's hand the cruel curb,
And check'd the groaning nation till it bled;
On different rocks they met one common ruin.
Their edicts were irresolute, their laws
Were feebly plann'd, their counsels ill advis'd;
Now so relax'd, and now so overstrain'd,
That the tir'd people, wearied with the weight
They long have borne, will soon disdain controul,
Tread on all rule, and spurn the hand that guides 'em.

Darius. But say what remedy?

Phar. That too, O king!
Thy servants have provided. Hitherto
They bare the yoke submissive. But to fix
Thy pow'r and their obedience, to reduce
All hearts to thy dominion, yet avoid
Those deeds of cruelty thy nature starts at,
Thou should'st begin by some imperial act
Of absolute dominion, yet unstain'd
By aught of barbarous. For know, O king!
Wholesome severity, if wisely fram'd
With sober discipline, procures more reverence
Than all the lenient counsels and weak measures
Of frail irresolution.

Darius. Now proceed
To thy request.

Phar. Not I, but all request it.
Be thy imperial edict issued straight,
And let a firm decree be this day pass'd,
Irrevocable as our Median laws.
Ordain, that for the space of thirty days
No subject in thy realm shall aught request
Of God or man, except of thee, O king!

Darius. Wherefore this strange decree?

Phar. 'Twill fix the crown
With lasting safety on thy royal brow,
And, by a bloodless means, preserve th' obedience
Of this new empire. Think how much 'twill raise
Thy high renown! 'Twill make thy name rever'd,
And popular beyond example. What!
To be as Heav'n, dispensing good and ill
For thirty days! With thine own ears to hear
Thy people's wants, with thine own lib'ral hands
To bless thy suppliant subjects! O, Darius!
Thou'lt seem as bounteous as a giving God!
And reign in ev'ry heart in Babylon
As well as Media! What a glorious state,
To be the sovereign arbiter of good!
The first efficient cause of happiness!
To scatter mercies with a plenteous hand,
And to be blest thyself in blessing others!

Darius. Is this the gen'ral wish?

[*Princes and courtiers kneel.*

Chief president. Of one, of all.
Behold thy princes, presidents and lords,
Thy counsellors, and captains! See, O king!

[*Presents the edict.*

Behold the instrument our zeal has drawn;
The edict is prepar'd. We only wait
The confirmation of thy gracious word,
And thy imperial signet.

Darius. Say, Pharnaces,
What penalty awaits the man who dares
Transgress our mandate?

Phar. Instant death, O king!
This statute says; 'Should any subject dare
Petition, for the space of thirty days,
Of God or man, except of thee, O king!
He shall be thrown into yon dreadful den
Of hungry lions!'

Darius. Hold! Methinks a deed
Of such importance should be wisely weigh'd.

Phar. We have resolv'd it, mighty king! with care,
With closest scrutiny. On us devolve
Whatever blame occurs!

Darius. I'm satisfy'd.
Then to your wisdom I commit me, princes.
Behold the royal signet: see 'tis done.

Phar. (*aside*) There Daniel fell! That signet seal'd his doom.

Darius (*after a pause.*) Let me reflect—Sure I have been too rash!
Why such intemp'rate haste? But you are wise;
And would not counsel this severe decree
But for the wisest purpose. Yet, methinks,
I might have weigh'd, and in my mind resolv'd
This statute, ere, the royal signet stamp'd,
It had been past repeal. Sage Daniel, too!
My counsellor, my guide, my well-try'd friend,
He should have been consulted; he, whose wisdom
I still have found oracular!

Phar. Mighty king!
'Tis as it should be. The decree is past
Irrevocable, as the steadfast law

Of Mede and Persian, which can never change.
Those who observe it live, as is most meet,
High in thy grace;—who violate it, die.

PART IV.

Scene—DANIEL'S *house.*

DANIEL, ARASPES.

Araspes. OH, holy Daniel! prophet, father, friend,
I come the wretched messenger of ill!
Thy foes complot thy death. For what can mean
This new-made law, extorted from the king
Almost by force? What can it mean, O Daniel,
But to involve thee in the toils they spread
To snare thy precious life?

Daniel. How! was the king
Consenting to this edict?

Araspes. They surpris'd
His easy nature; took him when his heart
Was soften'd by their blandishments. They wore
The mask of public virtue to deceive him.
Beneath the specious name of general good,
They wrought him to their purposes: no time
Allow'd him to deliberate. One short hour,
Another moment, and his soul had gain'd
Her natural tone of virtue.

Daniel. That great Power
Who suffers evil only to produce
Some unseen good, permits that this should be:
And HE permitting, I, well pleas'd resign.
Retire, my friend: this is my second hour
Of daily pray'r. Anon we'll meet again.
Here in the open face of that bright sun
Thy fathers worshipp'd, will I offer up,
As is my rule, petitions to my God,
For thee, for me, for Solyma, for all!

Araspes. Oh, stay! what mean'st thou! sure thou hast not heard
The edict of the king? I thought but now,
Thou knew'st its purport. It expressly says,
That no petition henceforth shall be made,
For thirty days save only to the king;
Nor pray'r nor intercession shall be heard
Of any God or man, but of Darius.

Dan. And think'st thou then my reverence for the king,
Good as he is, shall tempt me to renounce
My sworn allegiance to the King of kings?
Hast thou commanded legions? strove in battle,
Defy'd the face of danger, mock'd at death
In all its frightful forms, and tremblest now?
Come learn of me; I'll teach thee to be bold,
Though sword I never drew! Fear not, Araspes,
The feeble vengeance of a mortal man,
Whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein
Is he to be accounted of? but fear
The awaken'd vengeance of the living Lord
He who can plunge the everlasting soul
In infinite perdition!

Aras. Then, O Daniel!
If thou persist to disobey the edict,
Retire and hide thee from the prying eyes
Of busy malice!

Dan. He who is asham'd
To vindicate the honour of his God,
Of him the living Lord shall be asham'd
When he shall judge the tribes!

Aras. Yet, O remember,
Oft have I heard thee say, the secret heart
Is fair devotion's temple; there the saint,
E'en on that living altar, lights the flame
Of purest sacrifice, which burns unseen,
Not unaccepted.—I remember too,
When Syrian Naaman* by Elisha's hand,
Was cleans'd from foul pollution, and his mind
Enlighten'd by the miracle, confess'd
The Almighty God of Jacob: that he deem'd it
No flagrant violation of his faith
To bend at Rimmon's shrine; nor did the seer
Forbid the rite external.

Dan. Know, Araspes,
Heav'n designs to suit our trials to our strength,
A recent convert, feeble in his faith:
Naaman, perhaps, had sunk beneath the weight
Of so severe a duty. Gracious Heav'n
Forbears to bruise the reed, or quench the flax
When feeble and expiring. But shall I,
Shall Daniel, shall the servant of the Lord,
A vet'ran in his cause—long train'd to know
And do his will—long exercis'd in wo,
Bred in captivity and born to suffer;
Shall I, from known, from certain duty shrink
To shun a threaten'd danger? O, Araspes!
Shall I, advanc'd in age, in zeal decline?
Grow careless as I reach my journey's end
And slacken in my pace, the goal in view?
Perish discretion, when it interferes
With duty! Perish the false policy
Of human wit, which would commute our safety
With God's eternal honour! Shall His law
Be set at nought, that I may live at ease?
How would the Heathen triumph, should I fall
Through coward fear! How would God's enemies
Insultingly blaspheme!

Aras. Yet think a moment.

Dan. No!—
Where evil may be *done*, 'tis right to ponder;
Where only *suffer'd* know the shortest pause
Is much too long. Had great Darius paus'd,
This ill had been prevented. But for me,
Araspes, to deliberate is to sin.

Aras. Think of thy pow'r, thy favour with Darius:
Think of thy life's importance to the tribes,
Scarce yet return'd in safety. Live! O, live!
To serve the cause of God!

Dan. God will himself
Sustain his righteous cause. He knows to raise
Fit instruments to serve him. Know, Araspes,
He does not need our crimes to help his cause,
Nor does his equitable law permit
A sinful act, from the prepost'rous plea
That good may follow it. For me, my friend,
The spacious earth holds not a bait to tempt me.
What would it profit me, if I should gain
Imperial Ecbatan, th' extended land
Of fruitful Media, nay, the world's wide empire,
If mine eternal soul must be the price?
Farewell, my friend! time presses. I have stol'n
Some moments from my duty to confirm

* Kings chap v.

And strengthen thy young faith! Let us fulfil
What Heav'n enjoins, and leave to Heav'n th' event!

PART V.

Scene—The Palace.

PHARNACES, SORANUS.

Phar. 'Tis done—success has crown'd our scheme, Soranus;
And Daniel falls into the deep-laid toils
Our prudence spread.

Sor. That he should fall so soon,
Astonishes e'en me! what! not a day!
What! not a single moment to defer
His rash devotions? Madly thus to rush
On certain peril quite transcends belief!
When happen'd it, Pharnaces?

Phar. On the instant:
Scarce is the deed accomplish'd. As he made
His ostentatious pray'r, e'en in the face
Of the bright God of day, all Babylon
Beheld the insult offer'd to Darius.
For, as in bold defiance of the law,
His windows were not clos'd. Our chosen bands,
Whom we had plac'd to note him, straight rush'd in,
And seiz'd him in the warmth of his blind zeal,
Ere half his pray'r was finish'd. Young Araspes,
With all the wild extravagance of grief,
Prays, weeps, and threatens. Daniel silent stands,
With patient resignation, and prepares
To follow them.—But see, the king approaches!

Sor. How 's this? deep sorrow sits upon his brow,
And stern resentment fires his angry eye!

Enter DARIUS.

Dar. O, deep-laid stratagem! O, artful wile!
To take me unprepar'd, to wound my heart,
E'en where it feels most tenderly, in friendship!
To stab my fame! to hold me up a mark
To future ages, for the perjur'd prince
Who slew the friend he lov'd! O Daniel, Daniel,
Who now shall trust Darius? Not a slave
In my wide empire, from the Indian main
To the cold Caspian, but is more at ease
Than I, his monarch! Yes! I 've done a deed
Will blot my honour with eternal stain!
Pharnaces! O, thou hoary sycophant!
Thou wily politician! thou hast snar'd
Thy unsuspecting master!

Phar. Great Darius,
Let not resentment blind thy royal eyes.
In what am I to blame? who could suspect
This obstinate resistance to the law?
Who could foresee that Daniel would perforce
Oppose the king's decree?

Dar. Thou, thou foresaw'st it!
Thou know'st his righteous soul would ne'er endure
So long an interval of pray'r. But I,
Deluded king! 'twas I should have foreseen
His steadfast piety. I should have thought
Your earnest warmth had some more secret source,
Something that touch'd you nearer than your love,
Your well-feign'd zeal for me.—I should have known
When selfish politicians, hackney'd long
In fraud and artifice, affect a glow
Of patriot fervour, or fond loyalty,
Which scorns all show of interest, that's the moment
To watch their crooked projects.—Well thou know'st
How dear I held him; how I priz'd his truth
Did I not choose him from a subject world,
Unbless'd by fortune, and by birth ungrac'd,
A captive and a Jew? Did I not love him?
Was he not rich in independent worth?
And great in native goodness? That undid him!
There, there he fell! If he had been less great,
He had been safe. Thou could'st not bear his brightness;
The lustre of his virtues quite obscur'd,
And dimm'd thy fainter merit. Rash old man!
Go, and devise some means to set me free
From this dread load of guilt! Go set at work
Thy plotting genius to redeem the life
Of venerable Daniel!

Phar. 'Tis too late.
He has offended 'gainst the new decree;
Has dar'd to make petition to his God,
Although the dreadful sentence of the act
Full well he knew. And by th' established law
Of Media, by that irrevocable,
Which he has dar'd to violate, he dies!

Dar. Impiety! presumption! monstrous law!
Irrevocable? Is there aught on earth
Deserves that name? Th' eternal laws alone
Of Oromasdes are unchangeable!
All human projects are so faintly fram'd,
So feebly plann'd, so liable to change,
So mix'd with error in their very form,
That mutable and mortal are the same.
But where is Daniel! Wherefore comes he not
To load me with reproaches? to upbraid me
With all the wrongs my barbarous haste has done him!
Where is he?

Phar. He prepares to meet his fate.
This hour he dies, for the act so decrees.

Dar. Suspend the bloody sentence. Bring him hither.
Or rather let me seek him and implore
His dying pardon, and his parting pray'r.

PART VI.

Scene—Daniel's house.

DANIEL, ARASPES.

Ara. STILL let me follow thee; still let me hear
The voice of Wisdom, ere the silver cord
By death's cold hand be loosen'd.

Dan. Now I'm ready!
No grief, no woman's weakness, good Araspes!
Thou should'st rejoice my pilgrimage is o'er,
And the blest heaven of repose in view.

Ara. And must I loose thee, Daniel? must thou die?

Dan. And what is death, my friend, that I should fear it?
To die! why 'tis to triumph; 'tis to join
The great assembly of the good and just;
Immortal worthies, heroes, prophets, saints!
Oh! 'tis to join the band of holy men,
Made perfect by their sufferings! 'Tis to meet
My great progenitors! 'Tis to behold
Th' illustrious patriarchs; they with whom the Lord
Deign'd hold familiar converse. 'Tis to see
Bless'd Noah and his children, once a world!
'Tis to behold, oh, rapture to conceive!
Those we have known, and lov'd, and lost below!
Bold Azariah, and the band of brothers,
Who sought, in bloom of youth, the scorching flames!
Nor shall we see heroic men alone,
Champions who fought the fight of faith on earth;
But heavenly conquerors, angelic hosts,
Michael and his bright legions, who subdu'd
The foes of truth! To join their blest employ
Of love and praise! to the high melodies
Of choirs celestial to attune my voice,
Accordant to the golden harps of saints!
To join in blest hosannahs to their king!
Whose face to see, whose glory to behold,
Alone were heaven, though saint or seraph none
Should meet our sight, and only God were there!
This is to die! Who would not die for this?
Who would not die, that he might live for ever?

DARIUS, DANIEL, ARASPES.

Dar. Where is he? where is Daniel?—Let me see him!
Let me embrace that venerable form,
Which I have doom'd to glut the greedy maw
Of furious lions!
Dan. King Darius, hail!
Dar. O, injur'd Daniel, can I see thee thus!
Thus uncomplaining! can I bear to hear
That when the ruffian ministers of death
Stopp'd thy unfinish'd pray'r, thy pious lips
Had just invok'd a blessing on Darius,
On him who sought thy life? Thy murd'rers drop
Tears of strange pity. Look not on me thus
With mild benignity! Oh! I could bear
The voice of keen reproach, or the strong flash
Of fierce resentment; but I cannot stand
That touching silence, nor that patient eye
Of meek respect.
Dan. Thou art my master still.
Dar. I am thy murderer! I have sign'd thy death!
Dan. I know thy bent of soul is honourable:
Thou hast been gracious still! Were it not so,
I would have met the appointment of high Heaven
With humble acquiescence; but to know
Thy will concurr'd not with thy servant's fate,
Adds joy to resignation.
Dar. Here I swear
By him who sits enthron'd in yon bright sun,
Thy blood shall be aton'd! On these thy foes,
Thou shalt have ample vengeance.
Dan. Hold, O king!
Vengeance is mine, th' eternal Lord hath said;
Myself will recompense with even hand,
The sinner for the sin. The wrath of man
Works not the righteousness of God!
Dar. I had hop'd
We should have trod this busy stage together
A little longer, then have sunk to rest
In honourable age! Who now shall guide
My shatter'd bark in safety? who shall now
Direct me? O, unhappy state of kings!
'Tis well the robe of majesty is gay,
Or who would put it on? A crown! what is it?
It is to bear the miseries of a people!
To hear their murmurs, feel their discontents,
And sink beneath a load of splendid care!
To have your best success ascrib'd to Fortune,
And Fortune's failures all ascrib'd to you!
It is to sit upon a joyless height,
To every blast of changing fate expos'd!
Too high for hope! too great for happiness!
For friendship too much fear'd! To all the joys
Of social freedom, and th' endearing charm
Of lib'ral interchange of soul unknown!
Fate meant me an exception to the rest,
And though a monarch, bless'd me with a friend;
And I—have murder'd him!
Dan. My hour approaches
Hate not my mem'ry, king: protect Araspes:
Encourage Cyrus in the holy work
Of building ruin'd Solyma. Farewell!
Dar. With most religious strictness I'll fulfil
Thy last request. Araspes shall be next
My throne and heart. Farewell!
[*They embrace.*
Hear, future kings!
Ye unborn rulers of the nation, hear!
Learn from my crime, from my misfortune learn,
Never to trust to weak or wicked hands,
That delegated pow'r which Oromasdes
Invests in monarchs for the public good.

PART VII.

Scene—The court of the palace.—The sun rising

DARIUS, ARASPES.

Dar. Oh, good Araspes! what a night of horror!
To me the dawning day brings no return
Of cheerfulness or peace! No balmy sleep
Has seal'd these eyes, no nourishment has past
These loathing lips, since Daniel's fate was sign'd!
Hear what my fruitless penitence resolves—
That thirty days my rashness had decreed
The edict's force should last, I will devote
To mourning and repentance, fasting, pray'r
And all due rites of grief. For thirty days
No pleasant sound of dulcimer or harp,
Sackbut or flute, or psaltery, shall charm
My ear, now dead to ev'ry note of joy!
Aras. My grief can know no period!
Dar. See that den!
There Daniel met the furious lion's rage!
There were the patient martyr's mangled limbs
Torn piece-meal! Never hide thy tears, Araspes;
'Tis virtuous sorrow, unalloy'd, like mine,
By guilt and fell remorse! Let us approach:

Who knows but that dread Pow'r to whom he pray'd
So often and so fervently, has heard him!
[*He goes to the mouth of the den.*
O Daniel, servant of the living God!
He whom thou hast serv'd so long, and lov'd so well,
From the devouring lions' famish'd jaws,
Can he deliver thee?
Dan. (*from the bottom of the den.*) He can—he has!
Dar. Methought I heard him speak!
Aras. O, wond'rous force
Of strong imagination! were thy voice
Loud as the trumpet's blast, it could not wake him
From that eternal sleep!
Dan. (*in the den.*) Hail, king Darius!
The God I serve has shut the lions' mouths,
To vindicate my innocence.
Dar. He speaks!
He lives!
Aras. 'Tis no illusion: 'tis the sound
Of his known voice.
Dar. Where are my servants? Haste,
Fly, swift as lightning, free him from the den;
Release him, bring him hither! break the seal
Which keeps him from me! See, Araspes! look!
See the charm'd lions!—Mark their mild demeanor:
Araspes, mark!—they have no pow'r to hurt him!
See how they hang their heads and smooth their fierceness
At his mild aspect!
Aras. Who that sees this sight,
Who that in after times shall hear this told,
Can doubt if Daniel's God be God indeed?
Dar. None, none, Araspes!
Aras. Ah, he comes, he comes!

Enter Daniel, *followed by multitudes.*

Dan. Hail, great Darius!
Dar. Dost thou live indeed!
And live unhurt?
Aras. O, miracle of joy!
Dar. I scarce can trust my eyes! How didst thou 'scape?
Dan. That bright and glorious Being, who vouchsaf'd
Presence divine, when the three martyr'd brothers
Essay'd the caldron's flame, supported me!
E'en in the furious lions' dreadful den,
The prisoner of hope, even there I turn'd
To the strong hold, the bulwark of my strength,
Ready to hear, and mighty to redeem!
Dar. (*to Aras.*) Where is Pharnaces? Take the hoary traitor!
Take too Soranus, and the chief abettors
Of this dire edict: let not one escape.
The punishment their deep-laid hate devis'd
For holy Daniel, on their heads shall fall
With tenfold vengeance. To the lion's den
I doom his vile accusers! All their wives,
Their children too, shall share one common fate!
Take care that none escape—Go, good Araspes.
[*Araspes goes out.*
Dan. Not so, Darius!
O spare the guiltless; spare the guilty too!
Where sin is not, to punish were unjust;
And where sin is, O king, there fell remorse
Supplies the place of punishment!
Dar. No more!
My word is past! Not one request, save this,
Shalt thou e'er make in vain. Approach, my friends;
Araspes has already spread the tale,
And see what crowds advance!
Peo. Long live Darius!
Long live great Daniel too, the people's friend!
Dar. Draw near, my subjects. See this holy man!
Death had no pow'r to harm him. Yon fell band
Of famish'd lions, soften'd at his sight,
Forgot their nature, and grew tame before him.
The mighty God protects his servants thus!
The righteous thus he rescues from the snare,
While Fraud's artificer himself shall fall
In the deep gulf his wily arts devise
To snare the innocent!
A courtier. To the same den
Araspes bears Pharnaces and his friends:
Fallen is their insolence! With prayers and tears
And all the meanness of high-crested pride,
When adverse fortune frowns, they beg for life.
Araspes will not hear. 'You heard not me,'
He cries, 'When I for Daniel's life implor'd;
His God protected him! see now if your's
Will listen to your cries!'
Dar. Now hear,
People and nations, languages and realms,
O'er whom I rule! Peace be within your walls!
That I may banish from the minds of men
The rash decree gone out; hear me resolve
To counteract its force by one more just.
In ev'ry kingdom of my wide-stretch'd realm
From fair Chaldea to the extremest bound
Of northern Media, be my edict sent,
And this my statute known. My heralds haste,
And spread my royal mandate through the land,
That all my subjects bow the ready knee
To Daniel's God—for HE alone is LORD.
Let all adore, and tremble at HIS name,
Who sits in glory unapproachable
Above the heavens—above the heaven of heavens!
HIS pow'r is everlasting; and HIS throne,
Founded in equity and truth, shall last
Beyond the bounded reign of time and space
Through wide eternity! With HIS right arm
HE saves, and who opposes? HE defends,
And who shall injure? In the perilous den
HE rescu'd Daniel from the lions' mouths;
HIS common deeds are wonders; all HIS works
One ever-during chain of miracles!

Enter Araspes.

Aras. All hail, O king! Darius, live for ever!
May all thy foes be as Pharnaces is!
Dar. Araspes, speak!
Aras. O, let me spare the tale!—
'Tis full of horror! Dreadful was the sight!
The hungry lions, greedy for their prey,
Devour'd the wretched princes ere they reach'd
The bottom of the den.
Dar. Now, now confess
'Twas some superior hand restrain'd their rage,
And tam'd their furious appetites.
People. 'Tis true.

The God of Daniel is a mighty God!
He saves and He destroys.
Aras. O, friend! O, Daniel!
No wav'ring doubts can ever more disturb
My settled faith.
Dan. To God be all the glory!

REFLECTIONS OF KING HEZEKIAH

IN HIS SICKNESS.

'Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die.'—*Isaiah*, xxxviii.

What, and no more?—Is this my soul, said I,
My whole of being! Must I surely die?
Be robb'd at once of health, of strength, of time,
Of youth's fair promise, and of pleasure's prime?
Shall I no more behold the face of morn,
The cheerful daylight, and the spring's return?
Must I the festive pow'r the banquet leave,
For the dull chambers of the darksome grave!
Have I consider'd what it is to die?
In native dust with kindred worms to lie;
To sleep in cheerless, cold neglect! to rot!
My body loath'd, my very name forgot!
Not one of all those parasites, who bend
The supple knee, their monarch to attend!
What, not one friend! No, not an hireling slave
Shall hail great Hezekiah in the grave.
Where 's he who falsely claim'd the name of *great*?
Whose eye was terror, and whose frown was fate?
Who aw'd an hundred nations from the throne?
See where he lies, dumb, friendless, and alone!
Which grain of dust proclaims the noble birth?
Which is the royal particle of earth?
Where are the marks, the princely ensigns where?
Which is the slave, and which great David's heir?
Alas! the beggar's ashes are not known
From his who lately sat on Israel's throne!
How stands my great account? My soul survey
The debt Eternal Justice bids thee pay!
Should I frail Memory's records strive to blot,
Will Heaven's tremendous reck'ning be forgot?
Can I, alas! the awful volume tear?
Or raze one page of the dread register?
'*Prepare thy house, thy heart in order set;*
Prepare the Judge of Heaven and earth to meet.'
So spake the warning prophet.—Awful words!
Which fearfully my troubled soul record.
Am I prepar'd? and *can* I meet my doom,
Nor shudder at the dreaded wrath to come?
Is all in order set, my house, my heart?
Does not besetting sin still claim a part?
No cherish'd error, loth to quit its place,
Obstruct within my soul the work of grace?
Did I each day for this great day prepare,
By righteous deeds, by sin-subduing pray'r?
Did I each night, each day's offence repent,
And each unholy thought and word lament?
Still have these ready hands th' afflicted fed,
And minister'd to Want her daily bread?
The cause I knew not, did I well explore?
Friend, advocate, and parent of the poor?
Did I to gratify some sudden gust
Of thoughtless appetite, some impious lust
Of pleasure or of pow'r, such sums employ
As would have flush'd pale penury with joy?
Did I in groves forbidden altars raise,
Or molten gods adore, or idols praise
Did my firm faith to Heaven still point the way?
Did charity to man my actions sway?
Did meek-ey'd Patience all my steps attend?
Did gen'rous Candour mark me for her friend?
Did I unjustly seek to build my name
On the pil'd ruins of another's fame?
Did I abhor, as hell, the insidious lie,
The low deceit, the unmanly calumny?
Did my fix'd soul the impious wit detest?
Did my firm virtue scorn th' unhallow'd jest?
The sneer profane, and the good ridicule
Of shallow Infidelity's dull school?
Did I still live as born one day to die,
And view th eternal world with constant eye?
If so I liv'd, if so I kept thy word,
In mercy view, in mercy hear me, Lord!
For oh! how strict soe'er I kept thy law,
From mercy only all my hopes I draw!
My holiest deeds *indulgence* will require;
The best but to *forgiveness* will aspire;
If thou my purest services regard,
'Twill be with pardon only, not reward!
How imperfection 's stamp'd on all below!
How sin intrudes in all we say or do!
How late in all the insolence of health,
I charm'd th' Assyrian* by my boast of wealth!
How fondly with elab'rate pomp display'd
My glitt'ring treasures! with what triumph laid
My gold and gems before his dazzled eyes,
And found a rich reward in his surprise?
O, mean of soul! can wealth elate the heart,
Which of the man himself is not a part!
O, poverty of pride! O, foul disgrace!
Disgusted Reason, blushing hides her face
Mortal and proud! strange contradicting terms!
Pride for death's victim, for the prey of worms!
Of all the wonders which th' eventful life
Of man presents! of all the mental strife
Of warring passions; all the raging fires
Of furious appetites and mad desires,
Not one so strange appears as this alone,
That man is proud of what is not his own!
How short is human life! the very breath!
Which frames my words, accelerates my death.
Of this short life how large a portion 's fled!
To what is gone I am already dead;
As dead to all my years and minutes past,
As I, to what remains, shall be at last.
Can I past miseries so far forget,
To view my vanish'd years with fond regret?

* This is an anachronism. Hezekiah did not show his treasures to the Assyrian till after his recovery from his sickness.

Can I again my worn-out fancy cheat?
Indulge fresh hope? solicit new deceit?
Of all the vanities weak man admires,
Which greatness gives, youth hopes, or pride desires,
Of these, my soul, which hast thou not enjoy'd?
With each, with all, thy sated pow'rs are cloy'd.
What can I then expect from length of days?
More wealth, more wisdom, pleasure, health, or praise?
More pleasure! hope not that, deluded king!
For when did age increase of pleasure bring?
Is health, of years prolong'd the common boast?
And dear-earn'd Fame, is it not cheaply lost?
More wisdom! that indeed were happiness;
That were a wish a king might well confess;
But when did Wisdom covet length of days?
Or seek its bliss in pleasures, wealth, or praise?
No:—Wisdom views with an indifferent eye
All finite joys, all blessings born to die.
The soul on earth is an immortal guest,
Compell'd to starve at an unreal feast;
A spark, which upward tends by nature's force;
A stream diverted from its parent source;
A drop, dissever'd from the boundless sea;
A moment parted from eternity:
A pilgrim panting for the rest to come;
An exile, anxious for his native home.
Why should I ask my forfeit life to save?
Is heaven unjust, which dooms me to the grave?
Was I with hope of endless days deceiv'd?
Or of lov'd life am I alone bereav'd?
Let all the great, the rich, the learn'd, the wise,
Let all the shades of Judah's monarchs rise,
And say, if genius, learning, empire, wealth,
Youth, beauty, virtue, strength, renown or health,
Has once revers'd th' immutable decree
On Adam pass'd of man's mortality?
What have these eyes ne'er seen the felon worm
The damask cheek devour, the finish'd form?
On the pale rose of blasted beauty feed,
And riot on the lip so lately red?
Where are our fathers? Where th' illustrious line
Of holy prophets, and of seers divine?
Live they for ever? Do they shun the grave?
Or when did Wisdom its professor save?
When did the brave escape? When did the breath
Of Eloquence charm the dull ear of Death?
When did the cunning argument avail,
The polish'd period, or the varnish'd tale;
The eye of lightning, or the soul of fire,
Which thronging thousands crowded to admire?
E'en while we praise the verse the poet dies;
And silent as his lyre great David lies.
Thou, blest Isaiah! who at God's command,
Now speak'st repentance to a guilty land,
Must die! as wise and good thou hadst not been,
As Nebat's son, who taught the land to sin!
And shall I then be spar'd? O monstrous pride!
Shall I escape when Solomon has died?
If all the worth of all the saints were vain—
Peace, peace, my troubled soul, nor dare complain!
Lord, I submit. Complete thy gracious will!
For if thou slay me, I will trust Thee still.
O be my will so swallow'd up in thine,
That I may do THY will in doing *mine.*

THE SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS:

A PASTORAL DRAMA FOR YOUNG LADIES.

——To rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot,
To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
To breathe th' enliv'ning spirit, and to fix
The gen'rous purpose of the female breast.—*Thomson.*

TO MRS. GWATKIN.

DEAR MADAM,—As the following poem turns chiefly on the danger of delay or error in the important article of education, I know not to whom I can, with more propriety, dedicate it than to you, as the subject it inculcates has been one of the principal objects of your attention in your own family.

Let not the name of dedication alarm you: I am not going to offend you by making your eulogium. Panegyric is only necessary to suspicious characters: Virtue will not accept it; Delicacy will not offer it.

The friendship with which you have honoured me from my childhood, will, I flatter myself, induce you to pardon me for venturing to lay before you this public testimony of my esteem, and to assure you how much I am, dear madam,

Your obedient, and obliged humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE object of the following poem, which was written in very early youth, was an earnest wish to furnish a substitute for the improper custom, which then prevailed, of allowing plays, and

those not always of the purest kind, to be acted by young ladies in boarding schools. And it has afforded a serious satisfaction to the author to learn that this little poem, and the preceding sacred dramas, have very frequently been adopted to supply the place of those more dangerous amusements. If it may be still happily instrumental in promoting a regard to Religion and Virtue in the minds of young persons, and afford them an innocent, and perhaps not altogether unuseful, amusement, in the exercise of recitation, the end for which it was originally composed, and the author's utmost wish in its republication, will be fully answered.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY A YOUNG LADY.

In these grave scenes, and unembellish'd strains,
Where neither sly intrigue nor passion reigns;
How dare we hope an audience will approve
A drama void of wit and free from love?
Where no soft Juliet sighs, and weeps, and starts,
No fierce Roxana takes by storm your hearts;
No comic ridicule, no tragic swagger,
Not one elopement, not one bowl or dagger!
No husband wrong'd, who trusted and believ'd,
No father cheated, and no friend deceiv'd;
No libertine in glowing strains describ'd,
No lying chambermaid that rake had brib'd:
Nor give we, to reward the rover's life,
The ample portion and the beauteous wife;
Behold, to raise the manners of the age,
The frequent moral of the scenic page!
And shall we then transplant these noxious scenes
To private life? to misses in their teens?
The pompous tone, the masculine attire,
The stilts, the buskin, the dramatic fire,
Corrupt the softness of the gentler kind,
And taint the sweetness of the youthful mind.
Ungovern'd passions, jealousy and rage,
But ill become our sex, still less our age;
Whether we learn *too well* what we describe,
Or *fail* the poet's meaning to imbibe;
In either case your blame we justly raise,
In either lose, or ought to lose, your praise.
How dull, if tamely flows th' impassion'd strain!
If well—how bad to be the thing we feign;
To fix the mimic scene upon the heart,
And keep the passion when we quit the part!
Such are the perils the dramatic muse,
In youthful bosoms, threatens to infuse!
Our timid author labours to impart
A less pernicious lesson to the heart;
What though no charm of melody divine,
Smooth her round period, or adorn her line;
Though her unpolish'd page in vain aspires
To emulate the graces she admires:
Though destitute of skill, her sole pretence
But aims at simple truth and common sense;
Yet shall her honest unassuming page
Tell that its author, in a modish age,
Preferr'd plain virtue to the boast of art,
Nor fix'd one dangerous maxim on the heart.
O if, to crown the efforts, she could find
They rooted but one error from one mind:
If in the bosom of ingenuous youth
They stamp'd one useful thought, one lasting truth;
'Twould be a fairer tribute to her name,
Than loud applauses, or an empty fame.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

Euphelia, Cleora, Pastorella, Laurinda, } four young ladies of distinction, in search of Happiness.

Urania, an ancient shepherdess.
Sylvia, Eliza, } her daughters.
Florella, a young shepherdess.

Scene—A Grove.

EUPHELIA, CLEORA, PASTORELLA, LAURINDA.

Cle. Welcome, ye humble vales, ye flow'ry shades,
Ye crystal fountains, and ye silent glades!
From the gay misery of the thoughtless great,
The walks of folly, the disease of state;
From scenes where daring Guilt triumphant reigns,
Its dark suspicions and its hoard of pains;
Where Pleasure never comes without alloy,
And Art but thinly paints fallacious joy;
Where Laughter loads the day, Excess the night,
And dull Satiety succeeds Delight;
Where midnight Vices their fell orgies keep,
And guilty revels scare the phantom Sleep;
Where Dissipation wears the name of Bliss;
From these we fly in search of Happiness.
Euph. Not the tir'd pilgrim all his dangers past,
When he descries the long sought shrine at last,
E'er felt a joy so pure as this fair field,
These peaceful shades, and smiling vallies yield!
For, sure, these oaks, which old as Time appear,
Proclaim Urania's lonely dwelling near.
Past. How the description with the scene agrees!
Here lowly thickets, there aspiring trees;
The hazel copse excluding noon-day's beam,
The tufted arbor, the pellucid stream;
The blooming sweet-briar, and the hawthorn shade,

The springing cowslips, and the daisy'd mead,
The wild luxuriance of the full blown fields,
Which Spring prepares, and laughing Summer yields.
Euph. Here simple Nature strikes th' enraptur'd eye
With charms, which wealth and art but ill supply;
The genuine graces, which *without* we find,
Display the beauty of the owner's *mind.*
Lau. These embow'ring shades conceal the cell,
Where sage Urania and her daughters dwell:
Florella too, if right we've heard the tale,
With them resides—the lily of the vale.
Cle. But soft! what gentle female form appears,
Which smiles of more than mortal beauty wears?
Is it the guardian Genius of the grove?
Or some fair angel of the choirs above?

Enter FLORELLA, *who speaks.*

Whom do I see? ye beauteous virgins say
What chance conducts your steps this lonely way?
Do you pursue some favourite lambkin stray'd?
Or do yon alders court you to their shade?
Declare, fair strangers! if aright I deem,
No rustic nymphs of vulgar rank you seem.
Cle. No cooling shades allure our eager sight,
Nor lambkins lost, our searching steps invite.
Flo. Or is it, hap'ly, yonder branching vine,
Whose tendrils round our low roof cottage twine;
Whose spreading height, with purple clusters crown'd,
Attracts the gaze of ev'ry nymph around?
Have these lone regions aught that charms beside?
Yours are my shades, my flow'rs, my fleecy pride.
Euph. Florella! our united thanks receive,
Sole proof of gratitude we have to give:
And since you deign to ask, O courteous fair!
The motive of our unremitting care:
Know then, kind maid, our joint researches tend
To find that sovereign good of life, a friend;
From whom the wholesome counsel we may gain,
How our young hearts may happiness obtain.
By Fancy's mimic pencil oft portray'd,
Still have we woo'd the visionary maid:
The lovely phantom mocks our eager eyes;
And still we chase, and still we miss the prize!
Cle. Long have we search'd throughout this bounteous isle,
With constant ardour and with ceaseless toil;
The various ways of various life we've try'd;
But still the bliss we seek has been deny'd.
We've sought in vain through ev'ry diff'rent state;
The murm'ring poor, the discontented great.
If Peace and Joy in palaces reside,
Or in obscurer haunts delight to hide;
If Happiness with worldly pleasures dwell,
Or shrouds her graces in the hermit's cell:
If Wit, if Science, teach the road to bliss,
Or torpid Dulness find the joys *they* miss;
To learn this truth, we've bid a long adieu
To all the shadows blinded men pursue.
—We seek Urania; whose sagacious mind
May lead our steps this latent good to find:
Her worth we emulate; her virtues fire
Our ardent hearts to *be* what we admire:
For though with care she shuns the public eye
Yet worth like *hers*, unknown can never lie.
Lau. On such a fair and faultless mode form'd,
By Prudence guided, and by Virtue warm'd,
Perhaps Florella can direct our youth,
And point our footsteps to the paths of Truth.
Flor. Ill would it suit my unexperienc'd age,
In such important questions to engage.
Young as I am, unskilful to discern,
Nor fit to teach, who yet have much to learn,
But would you with maturer years advise,
And reap the counsel of the truly wise,
The dame in whom such worth and wisdom meet,
Dwells in the covert of yon green retreat:
All that the world calls great she once possess'd,
With wealth, with rank, her prosp'rous youth was bless'd.
In adverse fortune, now serene and gay,
'Who gave,' she said, 'had right to take away.'
Two lovely daughters bless her growing years,
And by their virtues, well repay her cares.
With them, beneath her shelt'ring wing I live,
And share the bounties she has still to give;
For Heav'n, who in its dispensations join'd
A narrow fortune to a noble mind,
Has bless'd the sage Urania with a heart
Which Wisdom's noblest treasures can impart,
In Duty's active round each day is past,
As if she thought each day might prove her last:
Her labours for devotion best prepare,
And meek Devotion smooths the brow of care.
Past. Then lead, Florella, to that humble shed,
Where Peace resides from court and cities fled!

SONG.

I.

O Happiness, celestial fair,
Our earliest hope, our latest care,
O hear our fond request!
Vouchsafe, reluctant Nymph to tell
On what sweet spot thou lov'st to dwell,
And make us truly blest.

II.

Amidst the walks of public life,
The toils of wealth, ambition's strife,
We long have sought in vain;
The crowded city's noisy din,
And all the busy haunts of men,
Afford but care and pain.

III.

Pleas'd with the soft, the soothing pow'r
Of calm Reflection's silent hour,
Sequester'd dost thou dwell!
Where Care and Tumult ne'er intrude,
Dost thou reside with Solitude,
Thy humble vot'ries tell!

IV.

O Happiness, celestial fair,
Our earliest hope, our latest care!
Let us not sue in vain!

O deign to hear our fond request,
Come take possession of our breast,
And there for ever reign.
[*They retire.*

*Scene—The Grove.**

URANIA, SYLVIA, ELIZA.

SYLVIA (*singing.*)

I.

SWEET Solitude, thou placid queen
Of modest air and brow serene!
'Tis thou inspir'st the sage's themes;
The poet's visionary dreams.

II.

Parent of Virtue, nurse of Thought!
By thee were saints and patriarchs taught;
Wisdom from thee her treasure drew,
And in thy lap fair Science grew!

III.

Whate'er exalts, refines, and charms,
Invites to thought, to virtue warms;
Whate'er is perfect, fair, and good,
We owe to thee, sweet Solitude!

IV.

In these blest shades, O still maintain
Thy peaceful, unmolested reign!
Let no disorder'd thoughts intrude
On thy repose, sweet Solitude!

V.

With thee the charm of life shall last,
Although its rosy bloom be past;
Shall still endure when Time shall spread
His silver blossoms o'er my head.

VI.

No more with this vain world perplex'd,
Thou shalt prepare me for the next;
The springs of life shall gently cease,
And angels point the way to peace.

Ura. Ye tender objects of maternal love
Ye dearest joys my widow'd heart can prove;
Come taste the glories of the new-born day,
Aud grateful homage to its Author pay!
O! ever may this animating sight
Convey instruction while it sheds delight!
Does not that sun, whose cheering beams impart
Joy's glad emotions to the pure in heart;
Does not that vivid pow'r teach ev'ry mind
To be as warm, benevolent, and kind;
To burn with unremitted ardour still,
Like him to execute their Maker's will?
Then let us, Pow'r Supreme! thy will adore,
Invoke thy mercies, and proclaim thy pow'r.
Shalt thou these benefits in vain bestow?
Shall we forget the fountain whence they flow?
Teach us through these to lift our hearts to Thee,
And in the gift the bounteous giver see.
To view Thee as thou art, all good and wise,
Nor let thy blessings hide Thee from our eyes.
From all obstructions clear our mental sight;
Pour on our souls thy beatific light!
Teach us thy wond'rous goodness to revere,
With love to worship, and with rev'rence fear!
In the mild works of thy benignant hand,
As in the thunder of thy dread command.
In common objects we neglect thy pow'r,
While wonders shine in every plant and flow'r.
—Tell me, my first, my last, my darling care,

If you this morn have rais'd your hearts in pray'r?
Say did you rise from the sweet bed of rest,
Your God unprais'd, his holy name unblest?
Syl. Our hearts with gratitude and reverence fraught,
By those pure precepts you have ever taught;
By your example more than precept strong
Of pray'r and praise have tun'd their matin song.
Eliz. With ever new delight, we now attend
The counsels of our fond maternal friend.

Enter FLORELLA, *with* EUPHELIA, CLEORA, PASTORELLA, LAURINDA.

Flo. (*aside to the ladies*) See how the goodly dame, with pious art,
Makes each event a lesson to the heart!
Observe the duteous list'ners how they stand:
Improvement and delight go hand in hand.
Ura. But where's Florella?
Flor. Here's the happy she,
Whom Heav'n most favour'd when it gave her thee.
Ura. But who are these, in whose attractive mien,
So sweetly blended, ev'ry grace is seen
Speak, my Florella! say the cause why here
These beauteous damsels on our plains appear?
Flor. Invited hither by Urania's fame,
To seek her friendship, to these shades they came.
Straying alone at morning's earliest dawn,
I met them wand'ring on the distant lawn.
Their courteous manners soon engag'd my love:
I've brought them here your sage advice to prove.
Ura. Tell me, ye gentle nymphs! the reason tell,
Which brings such guests to grace my lowly cell?
My pow'r of serving, though indeed but small,
Such as it is, you may command it all.
Cle. Your counsel, your advice, is all we ask,
And for Urania that's no irksome task.
'Tis Happiness we seek: O deign to tell
Where the coy fugitive delights to dwell!
Ura. Ah, rather say where you have sought this guest,
This lovely inmate of the virtuous breast?
Declare the various methods you've essay'd
To court and win the bright celestial maid.
But first, though harsh the task, each beauteous fair
Her ruling passion must with truth declare,
From evil habits own'd, from faults confess'd,
Alone we trace the secrets of the breast.
Euph. Bred in the regal splendours of a court,
Where pleasures, dress'd in every shape, resort,
I try'd the pow'r of pomp and costly glare,
Nor e'er found room for thought, or time for pray'r:
In diff'rent follies ev'ry hour I spent;
I shunn'd Reflection, yet I sought Content.
My hours were shar'd betwixt the park and play,
And music serv'd to waste the tedious day;
Yet softest airs no more with joy I heard,
If any sweeter warbler was preferr'd;
The dance succeeded, and, succeeding, tir'd,
If some more graceful dancer were admir'd.
No sounds but flatt'ry ever sooth'd my ear:

Ungentle truths I knew not how to bear.
The anxious day induc'd the sleepless night,
And my vex'd spirit never knew delight:
Coy Pleasure mock'd me with delusive charms,
Still the thin shadow fled my clasping arms:
Or if some actual joy I seem'd to taste,
Another's pleasure laid my blessings waste:
One truth I prov'd, that lurking Envy hides
In ev'ry heart where Vanity presides,
A fairer face would rob my soul of rest,
And fix a scorpion in my wounded breast.
Or, if my elegance of form prevail'd
And haply her inferior graces fail'd:
Yet still some cause of wretchedness I found,
Some barbed shaft my shatter'd peace to wound.
Perhaps her gay attire exceeded mine—
When she was finer, how could I be fine?
Syl. Pardon my interruption, beauteous maid!
Can truth have prompted what you just have said?
What! can the poor pre-eminence of dress
Ease the pain'd heart, or give it happiness?
Or can you think your robes, though rich and fine,
Possess intrinsic value more than mine?
Ura. So close our nature is to vice allied,
Our very comforts are the source of pride;
And dress, so much corruption reigns within,
Is both the consequence and cause of sin.
Cle. Of Happiness unfound I too complain,
Sought in a diff'rent path, but sought in vain!
I sigh'd for fame, I languish'd for renown,
I would be flatter'd, prais'd, admir'd and known,
On daring wing my mountain spirit soar'd,
And Science through her boundless fields explor'd:
I scorn'd the salique laws of pedant schools,
Which chain our genius down by tasteless rules,
I long'd to burst these female bonds, which held
My sex in awe, by vanity impell'd:
To boast each various faculty of mind,
Thy graces, Pope! with Johnson's learning join'd:
Like Swift with strongly pointed ridicule,
To brand the villain, and abash the fool:
To judge with taste, with spirit to compose,
Now mount in epic, now descend to prose;
To join, like Burke, the beauteous and sublime,
Or build, with Milton's art, 'the lofty rhyme:'
Through Fancy's fields I rang'd; I strove to hit
Melmoth's chaste style, and Prior's easy wit:
Thy classic graces, Mason, to display,
And court the Muse of Elegy with Gray:
I rav'd of Shakspeare's flame and Dryden's rage,
And ev'ry charm of Otway's melting page.
I talk'd by rote the jargon of the schools,
Of critic laws, and Aristotle's rules;
Of passion, sentiment, and style, and grace,
And unities of action, time, and place.
The daily duties of my life forgot,
To study fiction, incident, and plot:
Howe'er the conduct of my life might err,
Still my dramatic plans were regular.
Ura. Who aims at ev'ry science, soon will find
The field how vast, how limited the mind!
Cle. Abstruser studies soon my fancy caught,
The poet in th' astronomer forgot:
The schoolmen's systems now my mind employ'd,
Their crystal Spheres, their Atoms and their Void
Newton and Halley all my soul inspir'd,
And numbers less than calculations fir'd;
Descartes and Euclid, shar'd my varying breast,
And plans and problems all my soul possess'd.
Less pleas'd to sing inspiring Phoebus' ray
Than mark the flaming comet's devious way.
The pale moon dancing on the silver stream,
And the mild lustre of her trembling beam,
No more could charm my philosophic pride,
Which sought her influence on the flowing tide.
No more ideal beauties fir'd my thought,
Which only facts and demonstrations sought.
Let common eyes, I said, with transport view
The earth's bright verdure, or the heav'n's soft blue,
False is the pleasure, the delight is vain,
Colours exist but in the vulgar brain.
I now with Locke trod metaphysic soil,
Now chas'd coy Nature through the tracts of Boyle;
To win the wreath of Fame, by Science twin'd,
More than the love of science fir'd my mind.
I seized on Learning's superficial part,
And title page and index got by heart;
Some learn'd authority I still would bring
To grace my talk and prove—the plainest thing:
This the chief transport I from science drew,
That all might know how much Cleora knew.
Not love, but wonder, I aspir'd to raise,
And miss'd affection, while I grasp'd at praise.
Past. To me, no joys could pomp or fame impart,
Far softer thoughts possess'd my virgin heart.
No prudent parent form'd my ductile youth,
Nor led my footsteps in the paths of truth.
Left to myself to cultivate my mind,
Pernicious novels their soft entrance find;
Their pois'nous influence led my mind astray;
I sigh'd for something, what, I could not say.
I fancy'd virtues which were never seen,
And dy'd for heroes who have never been:
I sicken'd with disgust at sober sense,
And loath'd the pleasures worth and truth dispense;
I scorn'd the manners of the world I saw;
My guide was fiction, and romance my law.
Distemper'd thoughts my wand'ring fancy fill,
Each wind a zephyr, and each brook a rill;
I found adventures in each common tale,
And talk'd and sigh'd to ev'ry passing gale;
Convers'd with echoes, woods, and shades, and bow'rs,
Cascades and grottos, fields and streams and flow'rs.
Retirement, more than crowds, had learn'd to please;
For treach'rous Leisure feeds the soft disease.
There, plastic Fancy ever moulds at will
Th' obedient image with a dang'rous skill;
The charming fiction with alluring art,
Awakes the passions, and infects the heart.
A fancy'd heroine, an ideal wife;
I loath'd the offices of real life.
These all were dull and tame, I long'd to prove
The gen'rous ardours of unequal love;
Some marvel still my wayward heart must strike,

Or prince, or peasant, each had charms alike:
Whate'er inverted nature, custom, law,
With joy I courted, and with transport saw.
In the dull walk of Virtue's quiet round,
No aliment my fever'd fancy found;
Each duty to perform observant still
But those which God and Nature bade me fill.

Eliza (*To Urania.*) O save me from the errors of deceit,
And all the dangers wealth and beauty meet.

Past. Reason perverted, Fancy on her throne,
My soul to all my sex's softness prone;
I neither spoke nor look'd as mortal ought;
To sense abandon'd, and by Folly taught:
A victim to Imagination's sway,
Which stole my health, and rest, and peace away;
Professions, void of meaning, I receiv'd,
And still I found them false—and still believ'd:
Imagin'd all who courted me, approv'd;
Who prais'd, esteem'd me; and who flatter'd, lov'd.
Fondly I hop'd (now vain those hopes appear)
Each man was faithful, and each maid sincere.
Still Disappointment mock'd the ling'ring day;
Still new-born wishes led my soul astray.
When in the rolling year no joy I find,
I trust the next, the next will sure be kind.
The next fallacious as the last appears,
And sends me on to still remoter years.
They come, they promise—but forget to give:
I live not, but I still intend to live.
At length, deceiv'd in all my schemes of bliss.
I join'd these three in search of Happiness.

Eliza. Is this the world of which we want a sight?
Are these the beings who are call'd polite?

Sylvia. If so, oh gracious Heav'n, hear Sylvia's prayer:
Preserve me still in humble virtue here!
Far from such baneful pleasures may I live,
And keep, O keep me, from the taint they give!

Lau. No love of fame my torpid bosom warms,
No Fancy soothes me, and no pleasure charms!
Yet still remote from happiness I stray,
No guiding star illumes my trackless way,
My mind, nor wit misleads nor passion goads,
But the dire rust of indolence corrodes;
This eating canker, with malignant stealth,
Destroys the vital pow'rs of moral health.
Till now, I've slept on Life's tumultuous tide,
No principle of action for my guide.
From ignorance my chief misfortunes flow;
I never wish'd to learn, or car'd to know.
With ev'ry folly slow-pac'd Time beguil'd:
In size a woman, but in soul a child.
In slothful ease my moments crept away,
And busy trifles fill'd the tedious day;
I liv'd extempore, as Fancy fir'd,
As chance directed, or caprice inspir'd:
Too indolent to think, too weak to choose,
Too soft to blame, too gentle to refuse;
My character was stamp'd from those around:
The figures they, my mind the simple ground.
Fashion, with monstrous forms, the canvass stain'd,
Till nothing of my genuine self remain'd;
My pliant soul from chance receiv'd its bent,
And neither good perform'd, nor evil meant.
From right to wrong, from vice to virtue thrown,
No character possessing of its own.
To shun fatigue I made my only law;
Yet ev'ry night my wasted spirits saw.
No plan e'er mark'd the duties of the day,
Which stole in tasteless apathy away:
No energy inform'd my languid mind
No joy the idle e'er must hope to find.
Weak indecision all my actions sway'd;
The day was lost before the choice was made.
Though more to folly than to guilt inclin'd,
A drear vacuity possess'd my mind;
Too old with infant sports to be amus'd,
Unfit for converse, and to books unus'd,
The wise avoided me, they could not hear
My senseless prattle with a patient ear.
I sought retreat, but found, with strange surprise,
Retreat is pleasant only to the wise;
The crowded world by vacant minds is sought,
Because it saves th' expense and pain of thought.
Disgusted, restless, ev'ry plan amiss,
I come with these in search of Happiness.

Urania. O happy they for whom, in early age,
Enlight'ning Knowledge spreads her letter'd page!
Teaches each headstrong passion to control.
And pours her lib'ral lesson on the soul!
Ideas grow from books their nat'ral food,
As aliment is chang'd to vital blood.
Though faithless Fortune strip her vot'ry bare,
Though Malice haunt him, and though Envy tear,
Nor Time, nor Chance, nor Want, can e'er destroy
This soul-felt solace, and this bosom joy!

Cleora. We thus united by one common fate,
Each discontented with her present state,
One common scheme pursue; resolv'd to know
If Happiness can e'er be found below.

Urania. Your candour, beauteous damsels, I approve,
Your foibles pity, and your merits love.
But ere I say the methods you must try
To gain the glorious prize for which you sigh,
Your fainting strength and spirits must be cheer'd
With a plain meal, by Temperance prepar'd.

Florella. No luxury our humble board attends,
But Love and Concord are its smiling friends.

SONG.

I.

Hail artless Simplicity beautiful maid,
In the genuine attractions of Nature array'd
Let the rich and the proud, and the gay and the vain,
Still laugh at the graces that move in thy train.

II.

No charm in thy modest allurements they find;
The pleasures they follow a sting leave behind
Can criminal passion enrapture the breast
Like Virtue, with Peace and Serenity blest?

III.

O would you Simplicity's precepts attend,
Like us, with delight at her altar you'd bend;
The pleasures she yields would with joy be embrac'd,
You'd practise from virtue and love them from taste.

IV.

The linnet enchants us the bushes among;
Though cheap the musician, yet sweet is the song;
We catch the soft warbling in air as it floats,
And with ecstacy hang on the ravishing notes.

V.

Our water is drawn from the clearest of springs,
And our food, nor disease nor satiety brings;
Our mornings are cheerful, our labours are blest,
Our ev'nings are pleasant, our nights crown'd with rest.

VI.

From our culture yon garden its ornament finds,
And we catch at the hint for improving our minds;
To live to some purpose we constantly try,
And we mark by our actions the days as they fly.

VII.

Since such are the joys that Simplicity yields,
We may well be content with our woods and our fields:
How useless to us then, ye great, were your wealth,
When without it we purchase both pleasure and health!

[*They retire into the cottage.*

Scene—A rural entertainment.

FLORELLA, EUPHELIA, CLEORA, LAURINDA, PASTORELLA.

FLORELLA (*sings.*)

I.

While Beauty and Pleasure are now in their prime,
And Folly and Fashion expect our whole time,
Ah! let not those phantoms our wishes engage;
Let us live so in youth, that we blush not in age.

II.

Though the vain and the gay may allure us awhile,
Yet let not their flatt'ry our prudence beguile;
Let us covet those charms that will never decay,
Nor listen to all that deceivers can say.

III.

'How the tints of the rose and the jasmine's perfume!
The eglantine's fragrance, the lilac's gay bloom,
Though fair and though fragrant, unheeded may lie,
For that neither is sweet when Florella is by.'

IV.

I sigh not for beauty, nor languish for wealth,
But grant me, kind Providence, virtue and health;
Then, richer than kings and as happy as they,
My days shall pass sweetly and swiftly away.

V.

When age shall steal on me, and youth is no more,
And the moralist Time shakes his glass at my door,
What charm in lost beauty or wealth should I find? [mind.
My treasure, my wealth, is a sweet peace of

VI.

That peace I'll preserve then, as pure as was giv'n,
And taste in my bosom an earnest of Heav'n;
Thus virtue and wisdom can warm the cold scene,
And sixty may flourish as gay as sixteen.

VII.

And when long I the burden of life shall have borne, [corn,
And Death with his sickle shall cut the ripe
Resign'd to my fate, without murmur or sigh,
I'll bless the kind summons, and lie down and die.

Euphe. Thus sweetly pass the hours of rural ease!
Here life is bliss, and pleasures truly please!

Past. With joy we view the dangers we have past,
Assur'd we've found felicity at last.

Flor. Esteem none happy by their outward air;
All have their portion of allotted care.
Though wisdom wears the semblance of content,
When the full heart with agony is rent,
Secludes its anguish from the public view,
And by secluding learns to conquer too:
Denied the fond indulgence to complain,
The aching heart its peace may best regain.
By love directed, and in mercy meant,
Are trials suffer'd and afflictions sent;
To stem impetuous Passion's furious tide,
To curb the insolence of prosp'rous Pride,
To wean from earth, and bid our wishes soar
To that blest clime where pain shall be no more;
Where wearied Virtue shall for refuge fly,
And ev'ry tear be wip'd from ev'ry eye.

Cleora. List'ning to you, my heart can never cease
To rev'rence Virtue, and to sigh for peace.

Flor. Know, e'en Urania, that accomplish'd fair [care,
Whose goodness makes her Heaven's peculiar
Though born to all that affluence can bestow,
Has felt the deep reverse of human wo:
Yet meek in grief, and patient in distress,
She knew the hand that wounds has pow'r to bless.
Grateful she bows, for what is left her still,
To HIM whose love dispenses good and ill;
To HIM who, while his bounty thousands fed,
Had not himself a place to lay his head;
To HIM who that he might our wealth insure,
Though rich himself consented to be poor.
Taught by his precepts, by his practice taught,
Her will submitted, and resigned her thought,
Through faith, she looks beyond this dark abode,
To scenes of glory near the throne of God

Enter URANIA, SYLVIA, ELIZA.

Ura. Since gentle nymphs! my friendship to obtain,
You've sought with eager step this peaceful plain,
My honest counsel with attention hear,
Though plain, well meant, imperfect, yet sincere;
What from maturer years alone I've known,

What time has taught me, and experience shown,
No polish'd phrase my artless speech will grace,
But unaffected Candour fill its place:
My lips shall flatt'ry's smooth deceit refuse,
And truth be all the eloquence I'll use.
Know then, that life's chief happiness and wo,
From good or evil education flow;
And hence our future dispositions rise;
The vice we practice, or the good we prize.
When pliant Nature any form receives,
That precept teaches or example gives,
The yielding mind with virtue should be grac'd,
For first impressions seldom are effac'd.
Then holy habits, then chastis'd desires,
Should regulate disorder'd Nature's fires.
If Ignorance then, her iron sway maintain,
If prejudice preside, or Passion reign,
If Vanity preserve her native sway,
If selfish tempers cloud the op'ning day,
If no kind hand impetuous Pride restrain,
But for the wholesome curb we give the rein;
The erring principle is rooted fast,
And fix'd the habit that through life may last.

Past. With heartfelt penitence we now deplore
Those squander'd hours, that time can ne'er restore.

Ura. Euphelia sighs for flatt'ry, dress, and show:
The common sources these of female wo!
In Beauty's sphere pre-eminence to find,
She slights the culture of th' immortal mind:
I would not rail at Beauty's charming pow'r,
I would but have her aim at something more;
The fairest symmetry of form or face,
From intellect receives its highest grace;
The brightest eyes ne'er dart such piercing fires,
As when a soul irradiates and inspires:
Beauty with reason needs not quite dispense,
And coral lips may sure speak common sense:
Beauty makes Virtue lovelier still appear;
Virtue makes Beauty more divinely fair!
Confirms its conquests o'er the willing mind,
And those your beauties gain, your virtues bind.
Yet would ambition's fire your bosom fill,
Its flame repress not—be ambitious still;
Let nobler views your best attention claim,
The object chang'd, the energy the same:
Those very passions which our heart invade,
If rightly pointed, blessings may be made.
Indulge the true ambition to excel
In that best art—the art of living well.
But first extirpate from your youthful breast
That rankling torment which destroys your rest:
All other faults may take a higher aim,
But hopeless Envy must be still the same.
Some other passions may be turn'd to good,
But Envy must subdue, or be subdu'd.
This fatal gangrene to our moral life,
Rejects all palliatives, and asks the knife;
Excision spar'd, it taints the vital part,
And spreads its deadly venom to the heart.

Uph. Unhappy those to bliss who seek the way,
In pow'r superior, or in splendour gay!
Inform'd by thee, no more vain man shall find
The charm of flatt'ry taint Euphelia's mind:
By thee instructed still my views shall rise,
Nor stop at any mark beneath the skies.

Urania. In fair Laurinda's uninstructed mind,
The want of culture, not of sense, we find;
Whene'er you sought the good, or shunn'd the ill,
'Twas more from temper than from principle:
Your random life to no just rules reduc'd,
'Twas chance the virtue or the vice produc'd:
The casual goodness *Impulse* has to boast,
Like morning dews, or transient show'rs is lost;
While Heav'n-taught Virtue pours her constant tide,
Like streams by living fountains still supply'd.
Be wisdom still, though late, your earnest care,
Nor waste the precious hours in vain despair:
Associate with the good, attend the sage,
And meekly listen to experienc'd age.
What, if acquirements you have fail'd to gain,
Such as the wise may want the bad attain
Yet still religion's sacred treasures lie
Inviting, open, plain to ev'ry eye;
For ev'ry age, for ev'ry genius fit,
Nor limited to science nor to wit;
Not bound by taste, to genius not confin'd,
But all may learn the truth for all design'd.
Though low the talents, and th' acquirements small,
The gift of grace divine is free to all;
She calls, solicits, courts you to be blest,
And points to mansions of eternal rest.
And when, advanc'd in years, matur'd in sense,
Think not with farther care you may dispense,
'Tis fatal to the int'rests of the soul
To stop the race before we've reach'd the goal;
For nought our higher progress can preclude
So much as thinking we're already good.
The human heart ne'er knows a state of rest:
Bad leads to worse, and better tends to best.
We either gain or lose, we sink or rise,
Nor rests our struggling Nature till she dies:
Then place the standard of perfection high;
Pursue and grasp it, e'en beyond the sky.

Lau. O that important Time could back return
Those misspent hours whose loss I deeply mourn!
Accept, just Heav'n, my penitence sincere,
My heartfelt anguish, and my fervent pray'r!

Ura. I pity Pastorella's hapless fate,
By nature gentle, gen'rous, mild, and great;
One false propension all her pow'rs confin'd,
And chain'd her finer faculties of mind;
Yet ev'ry virtue might have flourish'd there,
With early culture and maternal care.
If good we plant not, vice will fill the place,
And rankest weeds the richest soils deface.
Learn, how ungovern'd thoughts the mind pervert,
And to disease all nourishment convert.
Ah! happy she, whose wisdom learns to find
A healthful fancy and a well train'd mind!
A sick man's wildest dreams less wild are found,
Than the day-visions of a mind unsound.
Disorder'd phantasies indulg'd too much,
Like harpies, always taint whate'er they touch.
Fly soothing Solitude! fly vain Desire!
Fly such soft verse as fans the dang'rous fire!
Seek action; 'tis the scene which Virtue loves;
The vig'rous sun not only shines, but moves.

From sickly thoughts with quick abhorrence start,
And rule the fancy if you'd rule the heart:
By active goodness, by laborious schemes,
Subdue wild visions, and delusive dreams.
No earthly good a Christian's views should bound,
For ever rising should his aims be found.
Leave that fictitious good your fancy feigns
For scenes where real bliss eternal reigns:
Look to that region of immortal joys,
Where fear disturbs not, nor possession cloys;
Beyond what Fancy forms of rosy bow'rs,
Or blooming chaplets of unfading flow'rs;
Fairer than e'er imagination drew,
Or poet's warmest visions ever knew.
Press eager onward to those blissful plains
Where life eternal, joy perpetual reigns.

Past. I mourn the errors of my thoughtless youth,
And long, with thee, to tread the paths of truth.

Ura. Learning is all the bright Cleora's aim;
She seeks the loftiest pinnacle of fame;
On interdicted ground presumes to stand,
And grasps at Science with a vent'rous hand:
The privilege of man she dares invade,
And tears the chaplet from his laurell'd head.
Why found her merit on a foreign claim?
Why lose a substance to acquire a name?
Let the proud sex possess their vaunted pow'rs:
Be other triumphs, other glories ours!
The gentler charms which wait on female life,
Which grace the daughter and adorn the wife,
Be these our boast; yet these may well admit
Of various knowledge, and of blameless wit:
Of sense, resulting from a nurtur'd mind,
Of polish'd converse, and of taste refin'd:
Of that quick intuition of the best,
Which feels the graceful, and rejects the rest:
Which finds the right by shorter ways than rules
An art which Nature teaches—not the schools.
Thus conq'ring Sevigne the heart obtains,
While Dacier only admiration gains.
Know, fair aspirer, could you even hope,
To speak like Stonehouse, or to write like Pope,
To all the wonders of the poet's lyre,
Join all that taste can add, or wit inspire.
With every various pow'r of learning fraught;
The flow of style and the sublime of thought;
Yet, if the milder graces of the mind,
Graces peculiar to the sex design'd,
Good nature, patience, sweetness void of art;
If these embellished not your virgin heart,
You might be dazzling, but not truly bright;
Might glare, but not emit an useful light;
A meteor, not a star, you would appear;
For woman shines but in her proper sphere.
Accomplishments by Heav'n were sure design'd
Less to adorn than to amend the mind:
Each should contribute to this gen'ral end,
And all to virtue, as their centre, tend.
Th' acquirements, which our best esteem invite,
Should not project, but soften, mix, unite:
In glaring light not strongly be display'd,
But sweetly lost, and melted into shade.

Cleora. Confus'd with shame, to thy reproofs I bend,
Thou best adviser, and thou truest friend!
From thee I'll learn to judge and act aright,
Humility with Knowledge to unite:
The finish'd character must both combine,
The perfect woman must in either shine.

Ura. Florella shines adorn'd with every grace,
Her heart all virtue, as all charms her face:
Above the wretched, and below the great,
Kind Heav'n has fix'd her in a middle state;
The dæmon Fashion never warped her soul,
Her passions move at Piety's control;
Her eyes the movements of her heart declare,
For what she dares to be, she dares appear;
Unlectur'd in Dissimulation's school,
To smile by precept, and to blush by rule:
Her thoughts ingenuous, ever open lie,
Nor shrink from close Inspection's keenest eye,
No dark disguise about her heart is thrown;
'Tis Virtue's int'rest fully to be known;
Her nat'ral sweetness ev'ry heart obtains;
What Art and Affectation miss, she gains.
She smooths the path of my declining years,
Augments my comforts, and divides my cares.

Past. O sacred Friendship! O exalted state!
The choicest bounty of indulgent fate!

Ura. Let woman then her real good discern,
And her true int'rests of Urania learn:
As some fair violet, loveliest of the glade,
Sheds its mild fragrance on the lonely shade,
Withdraws its modest head from public sight,
Nor courts the sun, nor seeks the glare of light;
Should some rude hand profanely dare intrude,
And bear its beauties from its native wood,
Expos'd abroad its languid colours fly,
Its form decays, and all its odours die
So woman, born to dignify retreat,
Unknown to flourish, and unseen be great,
To give domestic life its sweetest charm,
With softness polish, and with virtue warm,
Fearful of Fame, unwilling to be known,
Should seek but Heaven's applauses and her own;
Hers be the task to seek the lonely cell
Where modest Want and silent Anguish dwell;
Raise the weak head, sustain the feeble knees,
Cheer the cold heart, and chase the dire disease.
The splendid deeds, which only seek a name,
Are paid their just reward in present fame;
But know, the awful all-disclosing day,
The long arrear of secret worth shall pay;
Applauding saints shall hear with fond regard.
And He, who witness'd here, shall there reward.

Euph. With added grace she pleads Religion's cause,
Who from her life her virtuous lesson draws.

Ura. In vain, ye fair! from place to place you roam,
For that true peace which must be found at home:
No change of fortune, nor of scene can give
The bliss you seek, which in the soul must live.
Then look no more abroad; in your own breast
Seek the true seat of happiness and rest.
Nor small, my friends! the vigilance I ask,
Watch well yourselves, this is the Christian's task.
The cherish'd sin by each must be assail'd,
New efforts added, where the past have fail'd:
The darling error check'd, the will subdu'd,
The heart by penitence and pray'r renew'd.
Nor hope for *perfect* happiness below;

Celestial plants on earth reluctant grow.
He who our frail mortality did bear,
Though free from sin, was not exempt from care.

Cleora. Let's join to bless that Pow'r who brought us here,
Adore his goodness, and his will revere;
Assur'd, that Peace exists but in the mind,
And Piety alone that Peace can find.

Ura. In its true light this transient life regard:
This is a state of trial, not reward.
Though rough the passage, peaceful is the port,
The bliss is perfect, the probation short.
Of human wit beware the fatal pride;
An useful follower, but a dang'rous guide:
On holy Faith's aspiring pinions rise;
Assert your birth-right, and assume the skies.
Fountain of Being! teach us to devote
To Thee each purpose, action, word and thought!
Thy grace our hope, thy love our only boast,
Be all distinctions in the Christian lost!
Be this in ev'ry state our wish alone,
Almighty, Wise and Good, Thy will be done!

ODE TO CHARITY.

TO BE PERFORMED BY THE CHARACTERS OF THE PIECE.

I.

O Charity, divinely wise,
Thou meek-ey'd daughter of the skies!
From the pure fountain of eternal light,
Where fair, immutable, and ever bright,
The beatific vision shines,
Where angel with archangel joins
In choral songs to sing His praise,
Parent of Life, Ancient of Days,
Who was ere Time existed, and shall be
Through the wide round of vast Eternity;
Oh come, thy warm celestial beams impart,
Enlarge my feelings, and expand my heart!

II.

Descend from radiant realms above,
Thou effluence of that boundless love
Whence joy and peace in streams unsully'd flow,
Oh deign to make thy lov'd abode below!
Though sweeter strains adorn'd my tongue
Than saint conceiv'd or seraph sung,
And though my glowing fancy caught
Whatever Art or Nature taught,
Yet if this hard unfeeling heart of mine
Ne'er felt thy force, O Charity divine!
An empty shadow Science would be found
My knowledge ignorance, my wit a sound!

III.

Though my prophetic spirit knew
To bring futurity to view,
Without thy aid e'en this would not avail,
For tongues shall cease and prophecies shall fail.
Come then, thou sweet immortal guest,
Shed thy soft influence o'er my breast,
Bring with thee Faith, divinely bright,
And Hope, fair Harbinger of light,
To clear each mist with their pervading ray,
To fit my soul for Heav'n, and point the way;
There Perfect Happiness her sway maintains,
For there the God of Peace for ever reigns.

STORIES

FOR PERSONS OF THE MIDDLE RANKS.



ADVERTISEMENT.

These Stories, which were first published, among a great number of others, in the Cheap Repository, under the signature Z, are here presented to the reader, much enlarged and improved. Such of them as are comprised in this volume being adapted to persons in a superior station to those which are contained in a former edition, and it was thought better to separate and class them accordingly. A brief account of the institution here referred to, will be given in a subsequent place.

THE HISTORY OF MR. FANTOM.

THE NEW FASHIONED PHILOSOPHER,

AND HIS MAN WILLIAM.

Mr. Fantom was a retail trader in the city of London. As he had no turn to any expensive vices, he was reckoned a sober decent man, but he was covetous and proud, selfish and conceited. As soon as he got forward in the world, his vanity began to display itself, though not in the ordinary method, that of making a figure and living away; but still he was tormented with a longing desire to draw public notice, and to distinguish himself. He felt a general sense of discontent at what he was, with a general ambition to be something which he was not; but this desire had not yet turned itself to any particular object. It was not by his money he could hope to be distinguished, for half his acquaintance had more, and a man must be rich indeed to be noted for his riches in London. Mr. Fantom's mind was a prey to his vain imaginations. He despised all those little acts of kindness and charity which every man is called to perform every day; and while he was contriving grand schemes, which lay quite out of his reach, he neglected the ordinary duties of life, which lay directly before him. Selfishness was his governing principle. He fancied he was lost in the mass of general society: and the usual means of attaching importance to insignificance occurred to him; that of getting into clubs and societies. To be connected with a party would at least make him known to that party, be it ever so low and contemptible; and this local importance it is which draws off vain minds from those scenes of general usefulness, in whcih, though they are of more value, they are of less distinction.

About this time he got hold of a famous little book written by the New Philosopher, whose pestilent doctrines have gone about seeking whom they may destroy; these doctrines found a ready entrance into Mr. Fantom's mind; a mind at once shallow and inquisitive, speculative and vain, ambitious and dissatisfied. As almost every book was new to him, he fell into the common error of those who begin to read late in life—that of thinking that what he did not know himself, was equally new to others; and he was apt to fancy that he and the author he was reading were the only two people in the world who knew any thing. This book led to the grand discovery; he had now found what his heart panted after—a way to *distinguish himself.* To start out a full grown philosopher at once, to be wise without education, to dispute without learning, and to make proselytes without argument, was a short cut to fame, which well suited his vanity and his ignorance. He rejoiced that he had been so clever as to examine for himself, pitied his friends who took things upon trust, and was resolved to assert the freedom of his own mind. To a man fond of bold novelties and daring paradoxes, solid argument would be flat, and truth would be dull, merely because it is not new. Mr. Fantom believed, not in proportion to the strength of the evidence, but to the impudence of the assertion. The trampling on holy ground with dirty shoes, the smearing the sanctuary with filth and mire, the calling prophets and apostles by the most scurrilous names was new, and dashing, and dazzling. Mr. Fantom, now being set free from the chains of slavery and superstition, was resolved to show his zeal in the usual way, by trying to free others; but it would have hurt his vanity had he known that he was the convert of a man who had written only for the vulgar, who had *invented* nothing, no, not even one idea of original wickedness; but who had stooped to rake up out of the kennel of infidelity, all the loathsome dregs and offal dirt, which politer unbelievers had thrown away as too gross and offensive for the better bred readers.

Mr. Fantom, who considered that a philoso

pher must set up with a little sort of stock in trade, now picked up all the common-place notions against Christianity, which have been answered a hundred times over: these he kept by him ready cut and dried, and brought out in all companies with a zeal which would have done honour to a better cause, but which the friends to a better cause are not so apt to discover. He soon got all the cant of the new school. He prated about *narrowness*, and *ignorance*, and *bigotry*, and *prejudice*, and *priestcraft* on the one hand; and on the other, of *public good*, the *love of mankind*, and *liberality*, and *candour*, and *toleration*, and above all, *benevolence*. Benevolence, he said, made up the whole of religion, and all the other parts of it were nothing but cant, and jargon, and hypocrisy. By benevolence he understood a gloomy and indefinite anxiety about the happiness of people with whom he was utterly disconnected, and whom Providence had put it out of his reach either to serve or injure. And by the happiness this benevolence was so anxious to promote, he meant an exemption from the power of the laws, and an emancipation from the restraints of religion, conscience, and moral obligation.

Finding, however, that he made little impression on his old club at the Cat and Bagpipes, he grew tired of their company. This club consisted of a few sober citizens, who met of an evening for a little harmless recreation after business; their object was, not to reform parliament, but their own shops; not to correct the abuses of government, but of parish officers; not to cure the excesses of administration, but of their own porters and apprentices; to talk over the news of the day without aspiring to direct the events of it. They read the papers with that anxiety which every honest man feels in the daily history of his country. But as trade, which they *did* understand, flourished, they were careful not to reprobate those public measures by which it was protected, and which they did *not* understand. In such turbulent times it was a comfort to each to feel he was a tradesman, and not a statesman; that he was not called to responsibility for a trust for which he found he had no talents, while he was at full liberty to employ the talents he really possessed, in fairly amassing a fortune, of which the laws would be the best guardian, and government the best security. Thus a legitimate self-love, regulated by prudence, and restrained by principle, produced peaceable subjects and good citizens; while in Fantom, a boundless selfishness and inordinate vanity converted a discontented trader into a turbulent politician.

There was, however, one member of the Cat and Bagpipes whose society he could not resolve to give up, though they seldom agreed, as indeed no two men in the same class and habits of life could less resemble each other. Mr. Trueman was an honest, plain, simple-hearted tradesman of the good old cut, who feared God and followed his business; he went to church twice on Sundays, and minded his shop all the week, spent frugally, gave liberally, and saved moderately. He lost, however, some ground in Mr. Fantom's esteem, because he paid his taxes, without disputing, and read his Bible without doubting.

Mr. Fantom now began to be tired of every thing in trade except the profits of it: for the more the word benevolence was in his mouth, the more did selfishness gain dominion in his heart. He, however, resolved to retire for a while into the country, and devote his time to his new plans, schemes, theories, and projects for the public good. A life of talking, and reading and writing, and disputing, and teaching, and proselyting, now struck him as the only life; so he soon set out for the country with his family; for unhappily Mr. Fantom had been the husband of a very worthy woman many years before the new philosophy had discovered that marriage was a shameful infringement on human liberty, and an abridgement of the rights of man. To this family was now added his new footman, William Wilson, whom he had taken with a good character out of a sober family. Mr. Fantom was no sooner settled than he wrote to invite Mr. Trueman to come and pay him a visit, for he would have burst if he could not have got some one to whom he might display his new knowledge; he knew that if on the one hand Trueman was no scholar, yet on the other he was no fool; and though he despised his *prejudices*, yet he thought he might be made a good decoy duck; for if he could once bring Trueman over, the whole club at the Cat and Bagpipes might be brought to follow his example; and thus he might see himself at the head of a society of his own proselytes; the supreme object of a philosopher's ambition. Trueman came accordingly. He soon found that however he might be shocked at the impious doctrines his friend maintained, yet that an important lesson might be learned even from the worst enemies of truth; namely, an ever wakeful attention to their grand object. If they set out with talking of trade or politics, of private news or public affairs, still Mr. Fantom was ever on the watch to hitch in his darling doctrines; whatever he began with, he was sure to end with a pert squib at the Bible, a vapid jest on the clergy, the miseries of superstition, and the blessings of philosophy. 'Oh!' said Trueman to himself, 'when shall I see Christians half so much in earnest? Why is it that almost all zeal is on the wrong side?'

'Well, Mr. Fantom,' said Trueman one day at breakfast, 'I am afraid you are leading but an idle sort of life here.'—'Idle, sir!' said Fantom; 'I now first begin to live to some purpose; I have indeed lost too much time, and wasted my talents on a little retail trade, in which one is of no note; one can't distinguish one's self.' 'So much the better,' said Trueman;' 'I had rather not distinguish myself, unless it was by leading a better life than my neighbours. There is nothing I should dread more than being talk'd about. I dare say now heaven is in a good measure filled with people whose names were never heard out of their own street and village. So I beg leave not to distinguish myself!' 'Yes, but one may, if it is only by signing one's name to an essay or paragraph in a newspaper,' said Fantom.—'Heaven keep John Trueman's name out of a newspaper,' interrupted he in a fright;

'for if it be there, it must either be found in the Old Bailey or the bankrupt list, unless, indeed, I were to remove shop, or sell off my old stock. Well, but Mr. Fantum, you, I suppose, are now as happy as the day is long?' 'O yes,' replied Fantom, with a gloomy sigh, which gave the lie to his words, 'perfectly happy! I wonder you do not give up all your sordid employments, and turn philosopher!' 'Sordid indeed!' said Trueman, 'do not call names, Mr. Fantom; I shall never be ashamed of my trade. What is it has made this country so great? a country whose merchants are princes? It is trade, Mr. Fantom, trade. I cannot say indeed, as well as I love business, but now and then, when I am overworked, I wish I had a little more time to look after my soul; but the fear that I should not devote the time, if I had it, to the best purpose, makes me work on; though often, when I am balancing my accounts, I tremble, lest I should neglect to balance the grand account. But still, since, like you, I am a man of no education, I am more afraid of the temptations of leisure, than of those of business, I never was bred to read more than a chapter in the Bible, or some other good book, or the magazine and newspaper; and all that I can do now, after shop is shut, is to take a walk with my children in the field besides. But if I had nothing to do from morning to night, I might be in danger of turning politician or philosopher. No, neighbour Fantom, depend upon it, that where there is no learning, next to God's grace, the best preservative of human virtue is business. As to our political societies, like the armies in the cave of Adullam, 'every man that is in distress, and every man that is in debt, and every man that is discontented, will always join themselves unto them.'

Fantom. You have narrow views, Trueman. What *can* be more delightful than to see a paper of one's own in print against tyranny and superstition, contrived with so much ingenuity, that, though the law is on the look-out for treason and blasphemy, a little change of name defeats its scrutiny. For instance; you may stigmatize *England* under the name of *Rome*, and *Christianity* under that of *Popery*. The true way is to attack whatever you have a mind to injure, under another name, and the best means to destroy the use of a thing, is to produce a few incontrovertible facts against the abuses of it. Our late travellers have inconceivably helped on the cause of the new philosophy, in their ludicrous narratives of credulity, miracles, indulgences, and processions, in popish countries, all which they ridicule under the broad and general name of Religion, Christianity, and *the Church*.' 'And are not you ashamed to defend such knavery?' said Mr. Trueman. 'Those who have a great object to accomplish,' replied Mr. Fantom, 'must not be nice about the means. But to return to yourself Trueman; in your little confined situation you can be of no use.' 'That I deny,' interrupted Trueman; 'I have filled all the parish offices with some credit. I never took a bribe at an election, no not so much as a treat; I take care of my apprentices, and do not set them a bad example by running to plays and Sadler's Wells, in the week, or jaunting about in a gig all day on Sundays; for I look upon it that the country jaunt of the master on Sundays exposes his servants to more danger than their whole week's temptation in trade put together.'

Fantom. I once had the same vulgar prejudices about the church and the Sabbath, and all that antiquated stuff. But even on your own narrow principles, how can a thinking being spend his Sunday better (if he must lose one day in seven by having any Sunday at all) than by going into the country to admire the works of nature.

Trueman. I suppose you mean the works of God: for I never read in the Bible that Nature made any thing. I should rather think that she herself was made by Him, who, when he said, 'thou shalt not murder,' said also, 'thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath day.' But now do you really think that all that multitude of coaches, chariots, chaises, vis-a-vis, booby-hutches, sulkies, sociables, phaetons, gigs, curricles, cabrioles, chairs, stages, pleasure carts, and horses, which crowd our roads; all those country houses within reach, to which the London friends pour in to the gorgeous Sunday feast, which the servants are kept from church to dress; all those public houses under the signs of which you read these alluring words, *an ordinary on Sundays;* I say, do you really believe that all those houses and carriages are crammed with philosophers, who go on Sunday into the country to admire the works of nature, as you call it! Indeed, from the reeling gait of some of them when they go back at night, one might take them for a certain sect called the tippling philosophers. Then in answer to your charge, that a little tradesman can do no good, it is not true; I must tell you that I belong to the Sick Man's Friend, and to the Society for relieving prisoners for small debts.

Fantom. I have no attention to spare to that business, though I would pledge myself to produce a plan by which the *national* debt might be paid off in six months; but all yours are pretty occupations.

Trueman. Then they are better suited to petty men of petty fortune. I had rather have an ounce of real good done with my own hands, and seen with my own eyes, than speculate about doing a ton in a wild way, which I know can never be brought about.

Fantom. I despise a narrow field. O for the reign of universal benevolence! I want to make all mankind good and happy.

Trueman. Dear me! sure that must be a wholesale sort of a job; had you not better try your hand at a town or a parish first!

Fantom. Sir, I have a plan in my head for relieving the miseries of the whole world. Every thing is bad as it now stands. I would alter all the laws; and do away all the religions, and put an end to all the wars in the world. I would every where redress the injustice of fortune, or what the vulgar call Providence. I would put an end to all punishments; I would not leave a single prisoner on the face of the globe. This is what I call doing things on a gaand scale. 'A scale with a vengeance,' said Trueman. 'As to releasing the prisoners, however, I do

not so much like that, as it would be liberating a few rogues at the expense of all honest men; but as to the rest of your plans, if all Christian countries would be so good as to turn Christians, it might be helped on a good deal. There would be still misery enough left indeed; because God intended this world should be earth and not heaven. But, sir, among all your oblations, you must abolish human corruption before you can make the world quite as perfect as you pretend. You philosophers seem to me to be ignorant of the very first seed and principle of misery—sin, sir, sin: your system of reform is radically defective; for it does not comprehend that sinful nature from which all misery proceeds. You accuse government of defects which belong to man, to individual man, and of course to man collectively.—Among all your reforms you must reform the human heart; you are only hacking at the branches, without striking at the root. Banishing impiety out of the world, would be like striking off all the pounds from an overcharged bill; and all the troubles which would be left, would be reduced to mere shillings, pence, and farthings, as one may say.'

Fantom. Your project would rivet the chains which mine is design'd to break.

Trueman. Sir, I have no projects. Projects are in general the offspring of restlessness, vanity, and idleness. I am too busy for projects, too contented for theories, and, I hope, have too much honesty and humility for a philosopher. The utmost extent of my ambition at present is, to redress the wrongs of a parish apprentice who has been cruelly used by his master: Indeed I have another little scheme, which is to prosecute a fellow in our street who has suffered a poor wretch in a workhouse, of which he had the care, to perish through neglect, and you must assist me.

Fantom. The parish must do that. You must not apply to me for the redress of such petty grievances. I own that the wrongs of the Poles and South Americans so fill my mind, as to leave me no time to attend to the petty sorrows of workhouses and parish apprentices. It is provinces, empires, continents, that the benevolence of the philosopher embraces; every one can do a little paltry good to his next neighbour.

Trueman. Every one can, but I do not see that every one does. If they would, indeed, your business would be ready done at your hands, and your grand ocean of benevolence would be filled with the drops which private charity would throw into it. I am glad, however, you are such a friend to the prisoners, because I am just now getting a little subscription from our club, to set free our poor old friend Tom Saunders, a very honest brother tradesman, who got first into debt, and then into jail, through no fault of his own, but merely through the pressure of the times. We have each of us allowed a trifle every week towards maintaining Tom's young family since he has been in prison; but we think we shall do much more service to Saunders, and indeed in the end lighten our own expense, by paying down at once a little sum to restore him to the comforts of life, and put him in a way of maintaining his family again. We have made up the money all except five guineas I am already promised four, and you have nothing to do but give me the fifth. And so for a single guinea, without any of the trouble, the meetings, and the looking into his affairs, which we have had; which, let me tell you, is the best, and to a man of business, the dearest part of charity, you will at once have the pleasure (and it is no small one) of helping to save a worthy family from starving of redeeming an old friend from gaol, and of putting a little of your boasted benevolence into action. Realize! master Fantom: there is nothing like realizing. 'Why, hark ye, Mr. Trueman,' said Fantom, stammering, and looking very black, 'do not think I value a guinea; no sir, I despise money; it is trash; it is dirt, and beneath the regard of a wise man. It is one of the unfeeling inventions of artificial society. Sir, I could talk to you for half a day on the abuse of riches, and on my own contempt of money.'

Trueman. O pray do not give yourself the trouble; it will be an easier way by half of vindicating yourself from one, and of proving the other, just to put your hand in your pocket and give me a guinea, without saying a word about it: and then to you who value time so much, and money so little, it will cut the matter short. But come now, (for I see you will give nothing) I should be mighty glad to know what is the sort of good you do yourselves, since you always object to what is done by others. 'Sir,' said Mr. Fantom, 'the object of a true philosopher is to diffuse light and knowledge. I wish to see the whole world enlightened.'

Trueman. Amen! if you mean with the light of the Gospel. But if you mean that one religion is as good as another, and that no religion is best of all; and that we shall become wiser and better by setting aside the very means which Providence bestowed to make us wise and good: in short, if you want to make the whole world philosophers, why they had better stay as they are. But as to the true light, I wish it to reach the very lowest, and I therefore bless God for charity-schools, as instruments of diffusing it among the poor.

Fantom, who had no reason to expect that his friend was going to call upon him for a subscription on this account, ventured to praise them: saying, 'I am no enemy to these institutions. I would indeed change the object of instruction, but I would have the whole world instructed.'

Here Mrs. Fantom, who, with her daughter, had quietly sat by at their work, ventured to put in a word, a liberty she seldom took with her husband; who in his zeal to make the whole world free and happy, was too prudent to include his wife among the objects on whom he wished to confer freedom and happiness. 'Then, my dear,' said she, 'I wonder you do not let your own servants be taught a little. The maids can scarcely tell a letter, or say the Lord's prayer, and you know you will not allow them time to learn. William, too, has never been at church since we came out of town. He was at first very orderly and obedient, but now he is seldom sober of an evening; and in the morning when he should be rubbing the tables in

the parlour, he is generally lolling upon them, and reading your little manuel of the new philosophy.'—'Mrs. Fantom, said her husband angrily, 'you know that my labours for the public good leave me little time to think of my own family. I must have a great field, I like to do good to hundreds at once.'

'I am very glad of that papa,' said miss Polly; 'for then I hope you will not refuse to subscribe to all those pretty children at the Sunday-school, as you did yesterday, when the gentleman came a begging, because that is the very thing you were wishing for; there are two or three hundred to be done good at once.'

Trueman. Well, Mr. Fantom, you are a wonderful man to keep up such a stock of benevolence at so small an expense. To love mankind so dearly, and yet avoid all opportunities of doing them good; to have such a noble zeal for the millions, and to feel so little compassion for the units; to long to free empires and enlighten kingdoms; and yet deny instruction to your own village, and comfort to your own family. Surely none but a philosopher could indulge so much philanthropy, and so much frugality at the same time. But come, do assist me in a petition I am making in our poorhouse; between the old, whom I want to have better fed, and the young, whom I want to have more worked.

Fantom. Sir my mind is so engrossed with the partition of Poland, that I cannot bring it down to an object of such insignificance. I despise the man whose benevolence is swallowed up in the narrow concerns of his own family, or parish, or country.

Trueman. Well, now I have a notion that it is as well to do one's own duty, as the duty of another man; and that to do good at home, is as well as to do good abroad. For my part, I had as lieve help Tom Saunders to freedom as a Pole or a South American, though I should be very glad to help them too. But one must begin to love somewhere, and to do good somewhere; and I think it is as natural to love one's own family, and to do good in one's own neighbourhood, as to any body else. And if every man in every family, parish, and county, did the same, why then all the schemes would meet, and the end of one parish, where I was doing good, would be the beginning of another parish where somebody else was doing good; so my schemes would jut into my neighbour's; his projects would unite with those of some other local reformer; and all would fit with a sort of dove-tail exactness. And what is better, all would join in furnishing a living comment on that practical precept: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself.'

Fantom. Sir, a man of large views will be on the watch for great occasions to prove his benevolence.

Trueman. Yes, sir; but if they are so distant that he cannot reach them, or so vast that he cannot grasp them, he may let a thousand little, snug, kind, good actions slip through his fingers in the meanwhile: and so between the great things that he cannot do, and the little ones that he will not do, life passes and nothing will be done.

Just at this moment miss Polly Fantom (whose mother had gone out some time before) started up, let fall her work, and cried out, 'O papa, do but look what a monstrous great fire there is yonder on the common! If it were the fifth of November I should think it were a bonfire. Look how it blazes!'—'I see plain enough what it is,' said Mr. Fantom, sitting down again without the least emotion. 'It is Jenkins's cottage on fire.'—'What, poor John Jenking, who works in our garden, papa?' said the poor girl in great terror. 'Do not be frightened, child,' answered Fantom, we are safe enough; the wind blows the other way. Why did you disturb us for such a trifle, as it was so distant? Come, Mr. Trueman, sit down.'—'Sit down,' said Mr. Trueman, 'I am not a stock, sir, nor a stone, but a man; made of the same common nature with Jenkins, whose house is burning. Come along—let us fly and help him,' continued he running to the door in such haste that he forgot to take his hat, though it hung just before him—'Come Mr. Fantom—come, my little dear—I wish your mamma was here—I am sorry she went out just now—we may all do some good; every body may be of some use at a fire. Even you, miss Polly, may save some of these poor people's things in your apron, while your papa and I hand the buckets.' All this he said as he run along with the young lady in his hand; not doubting but Fantom and his whole family were following close behind him. But the present distress was neither grand enough nor far enough from home to satisfy the wide-stretched benevolence of the philosopher, who sat down within sight of the flames to work at a new pamphlet, which now swallowed up his whole soul, on universal benevolence.

His daughter, indeed, who happily was not yet a philosopher, with Mr. Trueman, followed by the maids, reached the scene of distress. William Wilson, the footman, refused to assist, glad of such an opportunity of being revenged on Jenkins, whom he called a surly fellow, for presuming to complain, because William always purloined the best fruit for himself before he set it on his master's table. Jenkins also, whose duty it was to be out of doors, had refused to leave his own work in the garden, to do Will's work in the house while he got drunk, or read the Rights of Man.

The little dwelling of Jenkins burnt very furiously. Mr. Trueman's exertions were of the greatest service. He directed the willing, and gave an example to the slothful. By living in London, he had been more used to the calamity of fire than the country people, and knew better what was to be done. In the midst of the bustle he saw one woman only who never attempted to be of the least use. She ran backwards and forward, wringing her hands, crying out in a tone of piercing agony, 'Oh, my child! my little Tommy! will no one save my Tommy?'—Any woman might have uttered the same words, but the look which explained them could only come from a mother. Trueman did not stay to ask if she were owner of the house, and mother of the child. It was his way to do all the good which could be done first, and then to ask questions. All he said was,

'Tell me which is the room?' The poor woman, now speechless through terror, could only point up to a little window in the thatch, and then sunk on the ground.

Mr. Trueman made his way through a thick smoke, and ran up the narrow staircase which the fire had not reached. He got safely to the loft, snatched up the little creature, who was sweetly sleeping in its poor hammock, and brought him down naked in his arms: and as he gave him to the half-distracted mother, he felt that her joy and gratitude would have been no bad pay for the danger he had run, even if no higher motive had set him to work. Poor Jenkins, half stupified by his misfortune, had never thought of his child; and his wife, who expected every hour to make him father to a second, had not been able to do any thing towards saving little Tommy.

Mr. Trueman now put the child into miss Fantom's apron, saying, 'Did not I tell you, my dear, that every body could be of use at a fire?' He then desired her to carry the child home, and ordered the poor woman to follow her; saying, he would return himself as soon as he had seen all safe in the cottage.

When the fire was quite out, and Mr. Trueman could be of no further use, he went back to Mr. Fantom's. The instant he opened the parlour door he eagerly cried out, 'Where is the poor woman, Mr, Fantom?' 'Not in my house, I assure you,' answered the philosopher. 'Give me leave to tell you, it was a very romantic thing to send her and her child to me: you should have provided for them at once, like a prudent man.'—'I thought I had done so,' replied Trueman, 'by sending them to the nearest and best house in the parish, as the poor woman seemed to stand in need of immediate assistance.' 'So immediate,' said Fantom, 'that I would not let her come into my house, for fear of what might happen. So I packed her off, with her child in her arms, to the workhouse; with orders to the overseers not to let her want for any thing.'

'And what right have you, Mr. Fantom,' cried Trueman in a high tone, 'to expect that the overseers will be more humane than yourself! But is it possible you can have sent that helpless creature, not only to walk, but to carry a naked child at such a time of night, to a place so distant, so ill provided, and in such a condition? I hope at least you have furnished them with clothes; for all their own little stores were burnt.' 'Not I, indeed;' said Fantom. 'What is the use of parish officers, but to look after these petty things?'

It was Mr. Trueman's way, when he began to feel very angry, not to allow himself to speak; because, he used to say, 'if I give vent to my feelings, I am sure, by some hasty word, to cut myself out work for repentance.' So without making any answer, or even changing his clothes, which were very wet and dirty from having worked so hard at the fire, he walked out again, having first inquired the road the woman had taken. At the door he met Mrs. Fantom returning from her visit. He told her his tale; which she had no sooner heard, than she kindly resolved to accompany him in search of Jenkins's wife. She had a wide common to walk over before she could reach either the workhouse or the nearest cottage. She had crawled along with her baby as far as she was able; but having met with no refreshment at Mr. Fantom's, and her strength quite failing her, she had sunk down on the middle of the common. Happily, Mr. Trueman and Mrs. Fantom came up at this very time. The former had had the precaution to bring a cordial and the latter had gone back and stuffed her pockets with old baby linen. Mr. Trueman soon procured the assistance of a labourer, who happened to pass by, to help him to carry the mother, and Mrs. Fantom carried the little shivering baby.

As soon as they were safely lodged, Mr. Trueman set off in search of poor Jenkins, who was distressed to know what was become of his wife and child; for having heard that they were seen going towards Mr. Fantom's, he despaired of any assistance from that quarter. Mr. Trueman felt no small satisfaction in uniting this poor man to his little family. There was something very moving in this meeting, and in the pious gratitude they expressed for their deliverance. They seemed to forget they had lost their all, in the joy they felt that they had not lost each other. And some disdainful great ones might have smiled to see so much rapture expressed at the safety of a child born to no inheritance but poverty. These are among the feelings with which Providence sometimes overpays the want of wealth. The good people also poured out prayers and blessings on their deliverer, who, not being a philosopher, was no more ashamed of praying with them than he had been of working for them. Mr. Trueman, while assisting at the fire, had heard that Jenkins and his wife were both very honest, and very pious people; so he told them he would not only pay for their new lodgings, but undertook to raise a little subscription among his riends at the Cat and Bagpipes towards re-uilding their cottage; and farther engaged, that f they would promise to bring up the child in he fear of God, he would stand godfather.

This exercise of Christian charity had given uch a cheerful flow to Mr. Trueman's spirits, hat long before he got home he had lost every race of ill-humour.—'Well, Mr. Fantom,' said e gayly, as he opened the door, 'now do tell me how you could possibly refuse going to help me to put out the fire at poor Jenkins's?'—'Be-ause, said Fantom, 'I was engaged, sir, in a ar nobler project than putting out a fire in a ittle thatched cottage. Sir, I was contriving to ut out a fire too; a conflagration of a far more readful kind—a fire, sir, in the extinction of which universal man is concerned—I was con-iving a scheme to extinguish the fires of the nquisition.'—'Why, man, they don't blaze that know of,' retorted Trueman. 'I own, that of ll the abominable engines which the devil ever nvented to disgrace religion and plague man-ind, that inquisition was the very worst. But do not believe popery has ventured at these iabolical tricks since the earthquake at Lisbon. o that a bucket of real water, carried to the al fire at Jenkins's cottage, would have done

more good than a wild plan to put out an imaginary flame which no longer burns. And let me tell you, sir, dreadful as that evil was, God can send his judgments on other sins besides superstition; so it behoves us to take heed of the other extreme, or we may have our earthquakes too. 'The hand of God is not shortened,' sir, 'that it cannot destroy, any more than it cannot save. In the meantime, I must repeat it; you and I are rather called upon to serve a neighbour from perishing in the flames of his house, just under our own window, than to write about the fires of the inquisition; which, if fear, or shame, or the restoration of common sense had not already put out, would have hardly received a check from such poor hands as you and I.'

'Sir,' said Fantom, 'Jenkins is an impertinent fellow; and I owe him a grudge, because he says he had rather forfeit the favour of the best master in England than work in my garden on a Sunday. And when I ordered him to read the Age of Reason, instead of going to church, he refused to work for me at all, with some impertinent hint about God and Mammon.'

'Oh, did he so?' said Mr. Trueman. 'Now I *will* stand godfather to his child, and make him a handsome present into the bargain. Indeed, Mr. Fantom, a man must be a philosopher with a vengeance, if when he sees a house on fire, he stays to consider whether the owner has offended him. Oh, Mr. Fantom, I will forgive you still, if you will produce me, out of all your philosophy, such a sentence as 'Love your enemy—do good to them that hate you—if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink;' I will give up the blessed Gospel for the Age of Reason, if you will only bring me one sentiment equivalent to this.'

Next day Mr. Trueman was obliged to go to London on business; but returned soon; as the time he had allotted to spend with Mr. Fantom was not yet elapsed. He came down the sooner indeed, that he might bring a small sum of money which the gentlemen at the Cat and Bagpipes had cheerfully subscribed for Jenkins. Trueman did not forget to desire his wife to make up also a quantity of clothing for this poor family, to which he did not neglect to add a parcel of good books, which indeed always made a part of his charities; as he used to say, there was something cruel in the kindness which was anxious to relieve the bodies of men, but was negligent of their souls. He stood in person to the new born child, and observed with much pleasure, that Jenkins and his wife thought a christening, not a season for merry-making, but a solemn act of religion. And they dedicated their infant to his Maker with becoming seriousness.

Trueman left the cottage and got back to Mr. Fantom's, just as the family were going to sit down to dinner, as he had promised.

When they sat down, Mr. Fantom was not a little out of humour to see his table in some disorder. William was also rather more negligent than usual. If the company called for bread, he gave them beer, and he took away the clean plates, and gave them dirty ones. Mr. Fantom soon discovered that his servant was very drunk; he flew into a violent passion, and ordered him out of the room, charging that he should not appear in his presence in that condition. William obeyed; but having slept an hour or two, and got about half sober, he again made his appearance. His master gave him a most severe reprimand, and called him an idle, drunken, vicious fellow. 'Sir,' said William, very pertly, 'If I do get drunk now and then, I only do it for the good of my country, and in obedience to your wishes.' Mr. Fantom, thoroughly provoked, now began to scold him in words not fit to be repeated; and asked him what he meant, 'Why, sir,' said William, 'you are a philosopher you know; and I have often overheard you say to your company, that private vices are public benefits; and so I thought that getting drunk was as pleasant a way of doing good to the public as any, especially when I could oblige my master at the same time.'

'Get out of my house,' said Mr. Fantom, in a great rage. 'I do not desire to stay a moment longer,' said William, 'so pay me my wages.'—'Not I indeed,' replied the master; 'nor will I give you a character; so never let me see your face again.' William took his master at his word, and not only got out of the house, but went out of the country too as fast as possible. When they found he was really gone, they made a hue-and-cry, in order to detain him till they examined if he had left every thing in the house as he had found it. But William had got out of reach, knowing he could not stand such a scrutiny. On examination, Mr. Fantom found that all his old port was gone, and Mrs. Fantom missed three of her best new spoons. William was pursued, but without success; and Mr. Fantom was so much discomposed that he could not for the rest of the day, talk on any subject but his wine and his spoons, nor harangue on any project but that of recovering both by bringing William to justice.

Some days passed away, in which Mr. Fantom, having had time to cool, began to be ashamed that he had been betrayed into such ungoverned passion. He made the best excuse he could; said no man was perfect, and though he owned he had been too violent, yet still he hoped William would be brought to the punishment he deserved. 'In the meantime,' said Mr. Trueman, 'seeing how ill philosophy has agreed with your man, suppose you were to set about teaching your maids a little religion?' Mr. Fantom coolly replied, 'that the impertinent report of a drunken footman could not spoil a system.'—'Your system, however, and your own behaviour,' said Trueman, 'have made that footman a scoundrel: and you are answerable for his offences.'—'Not I truly,' said Fantom; 'he has seen me do no harm; he has neither seen me cheat, gamble, nor get drunk; and I defy you to say I corrupt my servants. I am a moral man, sir.'

'Mr. Fantom,' said Trueman, 'if you were to get drunk every day, and game every night, you would, indeed, endanger your own soul, and give a dreadful example to your family; but great as those sins are, and God forbid that I should attempt to lessen them! still they are not worse, nay, they are not so bad, as the pestilent doctrines with which you infect your

house and your neighbourhood. A bad action is like a single murder. The consequence may end with the crime, to all but the perpetrator but a wicked principle is throwing lighted gun powder into a town; it is poisoning a river there are no bounds, no certainty, no ends to its mischief. The ill effects of the worst action may cease in time, and the consequences of your bad example may end with your life; but souls may be brought to perdition by a wicked principle after the author of it has been dead for ages.'

Fantom. You talk like an ignoramus, who has never read the new philosophy. All this nonsense of future punishment is now done away. It is *our* benevolence which makes us reject your creed; we can no more believe in a deity who permits so much evil in the present world, than one who threatens eternal punishment in the next.

Trueman. What! shall mortal man be more merciful than God? Do you pretend to be more compassionate than that gracious Father who sent his own Son into the world to die for sinners?

Fantom. You take all your notions of the Deity from the vulgar views your Bible gives you of him. 'To be sure I do,' said Trueman: 'can you tell me any way of getting a better notion of him? I do not want any of your farthing-candle philosophy in the broad sunshine of the Gospel, Mr. Fantom. My Bible tells me that 'God is love;' not merely loving, but LOVE. Now do you think a Being, whose very essence is love, would permit any misery among his children here, if it was not to be, some way or other, or some where or other, for their good? You forget, too, that in a world where there is sin, there must be misery. Then, too, I suppose, God permits this very misery partly to exercise the sufferers and partly to try the prosperous; for by trouble God corrects some and tries others. Suppose now, Tom Saunders had not been put in prison, you and I ———— no, I beg pardon, *you* saved your guinea; well then, our club and I could not have shown our kindness in getting him out; nor would poor Saunders himself have had an opportunity of exercising his own patience and submission under want and imprisonment. So you see one reason why God permits misery, is that good men may have an opportunity of lessening it.' Mr. Fantom replied, 'There is no object which I have more at heart; I have, as I told you, a plan in my head of such universal benevolence as to include the happiness of all mankind.'—'Mr. Fantom, said Trueman, 'I feel that I have a general good will to all my brethren of mankind; and if I had as much money in my purse as I have love in my heart, I trust I should prove it: all I say is, that, in a station of life where I cannot do much, I am more called upon to procure the happiness of a poor neighbour, who has no one else to look to, than to form wild plans for the good of mankind, too extensive to be accomplished, and too chimerical to be put in practice. It is the height of folly for a little ignorant tradesman to distract himself with projecting schemes which require the wisdom of scholars, the experience of statesmen, and the power of kings to accomplish. I cannot free whole countries, nor reform the evils of society at large, but I *can* free an aggrieved wretch in a workhouse; I *can* relieve the distresses of one of my journeymen; and I *can* labour to reform myself and my own family.'

Some weeks after this a letter was brought to Mr. Fantom from his late servant William, who had been turned away for drunkenness, as related above, and who had also robbed his master of some wine and some spoons. Mr. Fantom, glancing his eye over the letter, said, 'It is dated from Chelmsford jail; that rascal has got into prison. I am glad of it with all my heart, it is the fittest place for such scoundrels. I hope he will be sent to Botany Bay, if not hanged.'—'O, ho! my good friend,' said Trueman, 'then I find that in abolishing all prisons you would just let one stand for the accommodation of those who would happen to rob *you*. General benevolence, I see, is compatible with particular resentments, though individual kindness is not consistent with universal philanthropy.' Mr. Fantom drily observed, that he was not fond of jokes, and proceeded to read the letter. It expressed an earnest wish that his late master would condescend to pay him one visit in his dark and doleful abode; as he wished to say a few words to him before the dreadful sentence of the law, which had already been pronounced, should be executed.

Let us go and see the poor fellow,' said Trueman; 'it is but a morning's ride. If he is really so near his end it would be cruel to refuse him.' 'Not I, truly;' said Fantom; 'he deserves nothing at my hands but the halter he is likely to meet with. Such port is not to be had for money! and the spoons, part of my new dozen!'—'As to the wine, said Trueman, 'I am afraid you must give that up, but the only way to get any tidings of the spoons is to go and hear what he has to say; I have no doubt but he will make such a confession as may be very useful to others, which, you know, is one grand advantage of punishments; and, besides, we may afford him some little comfort.' 'As to comfort he deserves none from me,' said Fantom; 'and as to his confessions, they can be of no use to me, but as they give me a chance of getting my spoons; so I do not much care if I do take a ride with you.'

When they came to the prison, Mr. Trueman's tender heart sunk within him. He deplored the corrupt nature of man, which makes such rigorous confinement indispensably needful, not merely for the punishment of the offender, but for the safety of society. Fantom, from mere trick and habit, was just preparing a speech on benevolence, and the cruelty of imprisonment; for he had a set of sentiments collected from the new philosophy which he always kept by him. The naming a man in power brought out the ready cut and dried phrase against oppression. The idea of rank included every vice, that of poverty every virtue; and he was furnished with all the invectives against the cruelty of laws, punishments, and prisons, which the new lexicon has produced. But his mechanical benevolence was suddenly checked; the re-

collection of his old port and his new spoons cooled his ardour, and he went on without saying a word.

When they reached the cell where the unhappy William was confined, they stopped at the door. The poor wretch had thrown himself on the ground, as well as his chains would permit. He groaned piteously; and was so swallowed up with a sense of his own miseries, that he neither heard the door open, nor saw the gentlemen. He was attempting to pray, but in an agony which made his words hardly intelligible. Thus much they could make out—'God be merciful to me a sinner, the chief of sinners!' then, suddenly attempting to start up, but prevented by his irons, he roared out, 'O God! thou canst *not* be merciful to me, for I have denied thee; I have ridiculed my Saviour who died for me; I have broken his laws; I have derided his word; I have resisted his Spirit; I have laughed at that heaven which is shut against me; I have denied the truth of those torments which await me. To-morrow! to-morrow! O for a longer space for repentance! O for a short reprieve from hell!'

Mr. Trueman wept so loud that it drew the attention of the criminal. who now lifted up his eyes, and cast on his late master a look so dreadful that Fantom wished for a moment that he had given up all hope of the spoons, rather than have exposed himself to such a scene. At length the poor wretch said, in a low voice that would have melted a heart of stone, 'O, sir, are you there? I did indeed wish to see you before my dreadful sentence is put in execution. Oh, sir! to-morrow! to-morrow! But I have a confession to make to you. This revived Mr. Fantom, who again ventured to glance a hope at the spoons. 'Sir,' said William, 'I could not die without making my confession.' 'Ay, and restitution too, I hope,' replied Fantom: 'where are my spoons?' 'Sir, they are gone with the rest of my wretched booty. But oh, sir! those spoons make so petty an article in my black account, that I hardly think of them. Murder! sir, murder is the crime for which I am justly doomed to die. Oh, sir, who can abide the anger of an offended God? Who can dwell with everlasting burnings?' As this was a question which even a philosopher could not answer, Mr. Fantom was going to steal off, especially as he now gave up all hope of the spoons; but William called him back: 'Stay, sir, stay, I conjure you, as you will answer it at the bar of God. You must hear the sins of which you have been the occasion. You are the cause of my being about to suffer a shameful death.—Yes, sir, you made me a drunkard, a thief, and a murderer.' 'How dare you, William,' cried Mr. Fantom, with great emotion, 'accuse me with being the cause of such horrid crimes?' 'Sir,' answered the criminal, 'from you I learned the principles which lead to those crimes. By the grace of God I should never have fallen into sins deserving of the gallows, if I had not overheard you say there was no hereafter, no judgment, no future reckoning. O, sir! there *is* a hell, dreadful, inconceivable, eternal!' Here, through the excess of anguish, the poor fellow fainted away. Mr. Fantom, who did not at all relish this scene, said to his friend, 'well, sir, we will go, if you please, for you see there is nothing to be done.'

'Sir,' replied Mr. Trueman, mournfully, 'you may go if you please, but I shall stay, for I see there is a great deal to be done.'—'What!' rejoined the other, 'do you think it possible his life can be saved.' 'No, indeed,' said Trueman; 'but I hope it possible his soul may be saved.' 'I do not understand these things,' said Fantom, making toward the door. 'Nor I neither,' said Trueman; 'but as a fellow-sinner, I am bound to do what I can for this poor man. Do you go home, Mr. Fantom, and finish your treatise on universal benevolence, and the blessed effects of philosophy; and hark ye, be sure you let the frontispiece of your book represent *William on the gibbet*; that will be what our minister calls a PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION. You know I hate theories: this is *realizing*; this is PHILOSOPHY made easy to the meanest capacity. This is the precious fruit which grows on that darling tree, so many slips of which have been transplanted from that land of liberty of which it is the native, but which, with all your digging, planting, watering, dunging, and dressing, will, I trust, never thrive in this blessed land of ours.'

Mr. Fantom sneaked off to finish his work at home; and Mr. Trueman staid to finish his in the prison. He passed the night with the wretched convict; he prayed with him and for him, and read to him the penitential psalms, and some portions of the Gospel.—But he was too humble and too prudent a man to venture out of his depth by arguments and consolations which he was not warranted to use: this he left for the clergyman—but he pressed on William the great duty of making the only amends now in his power to those whom he had led astray.—They then drew up the following paper, which Mr. Trueman got printed, and gave away at the place of execution.

The last words, confession, and dying speech of WILLIAM WILSON, *who was executed at Chelmsford for murder.*

'I was bred up in the fear of God, and lived with credit in many sober families, in which I was a faithful servant; but being tempted by a little higher wages, I left a good place to go and live with Mr. Fantom, who, however made good none of his fine promises, but proved a hard master. Full of fine words and charitable speeches in favour of the poor; but apt to oppress, overwork, and underpay them. In his service I was not allowed time to go to church. This troubled me at first, till I overheard my master say, that going to church was a superstitious prejudice, and only meant for the vulgar. Upon this I resolved to go no more; for I thought there could not be two religions, one for the master, and one for the servant. Finding my master never prayed, I too left off praying: this gave Satan great power over me, so that I from that time fell into almost every sin. I was very uneasy at first, and my conscience gave me no rest; but I was soon reconciled by overhearing my master and another gentleman say, that death was only an eternal sleep, and hell and judgment were but an invention of priests to keep the poor in order. I mention this as a

warning to all masters and mistresses to take care what they converse about while servants are waiting at table. They cannot tell how many souls they have sent to perdition by such loose talk. The crime for which I die is the natural consequence of the principles I learnt of my master. A rich man, indeed, who throws off religion, may escape the gallows, because want does not drive him to commit those crimes which lead to it; but what shall restrain a needy man, who has been taught that there is no dreadful reckoning? Honesty is but a dream without the awful sanctions of heaven and hell. Virtue is but a shadow, if it be stripped of the terrors and the promises of the Gospel. Morality is but an empty name, if it be destitute of the principle and power of Christianity. Oh, my dear fellow-servants! take warning by my sad fate; never be tempted away from a sober service for the sake of a little more wages: never venture your immortal souls in houses where God is not feared. And now hear me, O, my God, though I have blasphemed thee! forgive me, O my Saviour, though I have denied thee! O Lord most holy, O God most mighty, deliver me from the bitter pains of eternal death, and receive my soul for His sake who died for sinners.

'WILLIAM WILSON.'

Mr. Trueman would never leave this poor penitent till he was launched into eternity, but attended him with the minister in the cart. This pious clergyman never cared to say what he thought of Williams state.—When Mr. Trueman ventured to mention his hope, that though his penitence was late, yet it was sincere, and spoke of the dying thief on the cross as a ground of encouragement, the minister with a very serious look, made this answer: 'Sir, that instance is too often brought forward on occasions to which it does not apply: I do not choose to say any thing to your application of it in the present case, but I will answer you in the words of a good man speaking of the penitent thief: 'There is *one* such instance given that nobody might despair, and there is *but* one, that nobody might presume.'

Poor William was turned off just a quarter before eleven; and may the Lord have mercy on his soul!

THE TWO WEALTHY FARMERS;

OR, THE HISTORY OF MR. BRAGWELL.

IN SEVEN PARTS

PART I.—THE VISIT.

MR. BRAGWELL and Mr. Worthy happened to meet last year at Weyhill fair. They were glad to see each other, as they had but seldom met of late; Mr. Bragwell having removed some years before from Mr. Worthy's neighbourhood, to a distant village, where he had bought an estate.

Mr. Bragwell was a substantial farmer and grazier. He had risen in the world by what worldly men call a run of good fortune. He had also been a man of great industry; that is, he had paid a diligent and constant attention to his own interest. He understood business, and had a knack of turning almost every thing to his own advantage. He had that sort of sense which good men call cunning, and knaves call wisdom. He was too prudent ever to do any thing so wrong that the law could take hold of him; yet he was not over scrupulous about the morality of an action, when the prospect of enriching himself by it was very great, and the chance of hurting his character was small. The corn he sent home to his customers was not always quite so good as the samples he had produced at market; and he now and then forgot to name some capital blemish in the horses he sold at fair. He scorned to be guilty of the petty frauds of cheating in weights and measures, for he thought that was a beggarly sin; but he valued himself on his skill in making a bargain, and fancied it showed his superior knowledge of the world to take advantage of the ignorance of a dealer.

It was his constant rule to undervalue every thing he was about to buy, and to overvalue every thing he was about to sell; but as he seldom lost sight of his discretion, he avoided every thing that was very shameful; so that he was considered merely as a hard dealer, and a keen hand at a bargain. Now and then when he had been caught in pushing his own advantage too far, he contrived to get out of the scrape by turning the whole into a jest, saying it was a good take in, a rare joke, and he had only a mind to divert himself with the folly of his neighbour, who could be so easily imposed on.

Mr. Bragwell, however, in his way, set a high value on character: not indeed that he had a right sense of its worth; he did not consider reputation as desirable because it increases influence, and for that reason strengthens the hands of a good man, and enlarges his sphere of usefulness: but he made the advantage of reputation, as well as of every other good, centre in himself. Had he observed a strict attention to principle, he feared he should not have got on so fast in the world as those do who consult expediency rather than probity, while, without a certain degree of character, he knew also, that he should forfeit that confidence which put other men in his power, and would set them as much on their guard against him, as he, who thought all mankind pretty much alike, was on his guard against them.

Mr. Bragwell had one favourite maxim; namely, that a man's success in life was a sure proof of his wisdom: and that all failure and misfortune was the consequence of a man's own folly. As this opinion was first taken up by him from vanity and ignorance, so it was more

and more confirmed by his own prosperity. He saw that he himself had succeeded greatly without either money or education to begin with; and he therefore now despised every man, however excellent his character or talents might be, who had not the same success in life. His natural disposition was not particularly bad, but prosperity had hardened his heart. He made his own progress in life the rule by which the conduct of all other men was to be judged, without any allowance for their peculiar disadvantages, or the visitations of Providence. He thought, for his part, that every man of sense could command success on his undertakings, and control and dispose the events of his own life.

But though he considered those who had had less success than himself as no better than fools, yet he did not extend this opinion to Mr. Worthy, whom he looked upon not only as a good but a wise man. They had been bred up when children in the same house; but with this difference, that Worthy was the nephew of the master, and Bragwell the son of the servant.

Bragwell's father had been ploughman in the family of Mr. Worthy's uncle, a sensible man, who farmed a small estate of his own, and who having no children, bred up young Worthy as his son, instructed him in the business of husbandry, and at his death left him his estate. The father of Worthy was a pious clergyman, who lived with his brother the farmer, in order to help out a narrow income. He had bestowed much pains on the instruction of his son, and used frequently to repeat to him a saying, which he had picked up in a book written by one of the greatest men this country ever produced—That there were two things with which every man ought to be acquainted, RELIGION AND HIS OWN BUSINESS.—While he therefore took care that his son should be made an excellent farmer, he filled up his leisure hours in improving his mind: so that young Worthy had read more good books, and understood them better, than most men in his station. His reading however had been chiefly confined to husbandry and divinity, the two subjects which were of the most immediate importance to him.

The reader will see by this time that Mr. Bragwell and Mr. Worthy were as likely to be as opposite to each other as two men could well be, who were nearly of the same age and condition, and who were neither of them without credit in the world. Bragwell indeed made far the greater figure; for he liked to *cut a dash*, as he called it. It was his delight to make the ancient gentry of the neighbourhood stare, at seeing a grazier vie with them in show, and exceed them in expense. And while it was the study of Worthy to conform to his station, and to set a good example to those about him, it was the delight of Bragwell to eclipse, in his way of life, men of larger fortune. He did not see how much his vanity raised the envy of his inferiors, the ill-will of his equals, and the contempt of his betters.

His wife was a notable stirring woman, but vain, violent, and ambitious; very ignorant, and very high-minded. She had married Bragwell before he was worth a shilling, and as she had brought him a good deal of money, she thought herself the grand cause of his rising in the world; and thence took occasion to govern him most completely. Whenever he ventured to oppose her, she took care to put him in mind that he owed every thing to her; that had it not been for her, he might still have been stumping after a plough-tail, or serving hogs in old Worthy's farm-yard; but that it was she who had made a gentleman of him. In order to set about making him a gentleman, she had begun by teazing him till he had turned away all his poor relations who worked in the farm: she next drew him off from keeping company with his old acquaintance; and at last persuaded him to remove from the place where he had got his money. Poor woman! she had not sense and virtue enough to see how honourable it is for a man to raise himself in the world by fair means, and then to help forward his poor relations and friends; engaging their services by his kindness, and endeavouring to turn his own advancement in life to the best account, that of making it the instrument of assisting those who had a natural claim to his protection.

Mrs. Bragwell was an excellent mistress, according to her own notions of excellence; for no one could say she ever lost an opportunity of scolding a servant, or was ever guilty of the weakness of overlooking a fault. Towards her two daughters her behaviour was far otherwise. In them she could see nothing but perfections, but her extravagant fondness for these girls was full as much owing to pride as to affectation. She was bent on making a family, and having found out that she was too ignorant, and too much trained to the habits of getting money, ever to hope to make a figure herself, she looked to her daughters as the persons who were to raise the family of the Bragwells; and to this hope she foolishly submitted to any drudgery for their sakes, and bore every kind of impertinence from them.

The first wish of her heart was to set them above their neighbours; for she used to say, what was the use of having substance, if her daughters might not carry themselves above girls who had nothing? To do her justice, she herself would be about early and late to see that the business of the house was not neglected. She had been bred to great industry, and continued to work when it was no longer necessary, both from early habit, and the desire of heaping up money for her daughters. Yet her whole notion of gentility was, that it consisted in being rich and idle; and, though she was willing to be a drudge herself, she resolved to make her daughters gentlewomen on this principle. To be well dressed, to eat elegantly, and to do nothing, or nothing of which is of any use, was what she fancied distinguished people in genteel life. And this is too common a notion of a fine education among a certain class; they do not esteem things by their use, but by their show. They estimate the value of their children's education by the money it costs, and not by the knowledge and goodness it bestows. People of this stamp often take a pride in the expense of learning, instead of taking pleasure in the advantages of it. And the silly vanity

of letting others see that they can afford any thing, often sets parents on letting their daughters learn not only things of no use, but things which may be really hurtful in their situation; either by setting them above their proper duties, or by taking up their time in a way inconsistent with them.

Mrs. Bragwell sent her daughters to a boarding-school, where she instructed them to hold up their heads as high as any body; to have more spirit than *to be put upon* by any one; never to be pitiful about money, but rather to show that they could afford to spend with the best; to keep company with the richest and most fashionable girls, in the school, and to make no acquaintance with farmers' daughters.

They came home at the usual age of leaving school, with a large portion of vanity grafted on their native ignorance. The vanity was added, but the ignorance was not taken away. Of religion they could not possibly learn any thing, since none was taught, for at that place Christianity was considered as a part of education which belonged only to charity schools. They went to church indeed once a Sunday, yet effectually to counteract any benefit such an attendance might produce, it was the rule of the school that they should use only French prayer-books; of course, such superficial scholars as the Miss Bragwells would always be literally praying in an unknown tongue; while girls of better capacity and more industry would infallibly be picking out the nominative case, the verb, and participle of a foreign language, in the solemn act of kneeling before the Father of Spirits, 'who searcheth the heart and tryeth the reins.' During the remainder of the Sunday they learnt their worldly tasks, all except actual needlework, which omission alone mark'd the distinction of Sunday from other days; and the governess being a French Roman Catholic, it became a doubtful point with some people, whether her zeal or her negligence in the article of religion would be most to the advantage of her pupils. Of knowledge the Miss Bragwells had got just enough to laugh at their fond parents' rustic manners and vulgar language, and just enough taste to despise and ridicule every girl who was not as vainly dressed as themselves.

The mother had been comforting herself for the heavy expense of their bringing up, by looking forward to the pleasure of seeing them become fine ladies, and the pride of marrying them above their station; and to this hope she constantly referred in all her conversations with them; assuring them that all her happiness depended on their future elevation.

Their father hoped, with far more judgment, that they would be a comfort to him both in sickness and in health. He had had no learning himself, and could write but poorly, and owed what skill he had in figures to his natural turn of business. He reasonably hoped that his daughters, after all the money he had spent on them, would now write his letters and keep his accounts. And as he was now and then laid up with a fit of the gout, he was enjoying the prospect of having two affectionate children to nurse him, as well as two skilful assistants to relieve him.

When they came home, however, he had the mortification to find, that though he had two smart showy ladies to visit him, he had neither dutiful daughters to nurse him, nor faithful stewards to keep his books, nor prudent children to manage his house. They neither soothed him by their kindness when he was sick, nor helped him by their industry when he was busy. They thought the maid might take care of him in the gout as she did before; for they fancied that nursing was a coarse and servile employment: and as to their skill in cyphering he soon found, to his cost, that though they knew how to *spend* both pounds, shillings, and pence, yet they did not know how so well to cast them up. Indeed it is to be regretted that women in general, especially in the middle class, are so little grounded in so indispensable, solid, and valuable an acquirement as arithmetic.

Mrs. Bragwell being one day very busy in preparing a great dinner for the neighbours, ventured to request her daughters to assist in making the pastry. They asked her with a scornful smile, whether she had sent them to a boarding school to learn to cook; and added, that they supposed she would expect them next to make hasty-puddings for the hay-makers. So saying, they coolly marched off to their music. When the mother found her girls were too polite to be of any use, she would take comfort in observing how her parlour was set out with their fillagree and flowers, their embroidery and cut paper. They spent the morning in bed, the noon in dressing, the evening at the harpsichord, and the night in reading novels.

With all these fine qualifications it is easy to suppose, that as they despised their sober duties, they no less despised their plain neighbours. When they could not get to a horse-race, a petty-ball, or a strolling play, with some company as idle and as smart as themselves, they were driven for amusement to the circulating library. Jack, the ploughboy, on whom they had now put a livery jacket, was employed half his time in trotting backwards and forwards with the most wretched trash the little neighbouring bookshop could furnish. The choice was often left to Jack, who could not read, but who had general orders to bring all the new things, and a great many of them.

It was a misfortune, that at the school at which they had been bred, and at some others, there was no system of education which had any immediate reference to the station of life to which the girls chiefly belonged. As persons in the middle line, for want of that acquaintance with books, and with life and manners, which the great possess, do not always see the connexion between remote consequences and their causes, the evils of a corrupt and inappropriate system of education do not strike *them* so forcibly; and provided *they can pay for it*, which is made the grand criterion between the fit and the unfit, they are too little disposed to consider the value, or rather the worthlessness, of the thing which is paid for: but literally go on to *give their money for that which is not bread.*

Their subsequent course of reading serves to establish all the errors of their education. In-

stead of such books as might help to confirm and strengthen them in all the virtues of their station, in humility, economy, meekness, contentment, self-denial, and industry; the studies now adopted are, by a graft on the old stock, made to grow on the habits acquired at school. Of those novels and plays which are so eagerly devoured by persons of this discription, there is perhaps scarce one which is not founded upon principles which would lead young women of the middle ranks to be discontented with their station. It is *rank*—it is *elegance*—it is *beauty* —it is *sentimental feelings*—it is *sensibility*— it is some needless, or some superficial, or some quality hurtful, even in that fashionable person to whom the author ascribes it, which is the ruling principle. This quality transferred into the heart and the conduct of an illiterate woman in an inferior station, becomes absurdity, becomes sinfulness.

Things were in this state in the family we are describing, or rather growing worse; for idleness and vanity are never at a stand; when these two wealthy farmers, Bragwell and Worthy, met at Weyhill fair, as was said before. After many hearty salutations had passed between them, it was agreed that Mr. Bragwell should spend the next day with his old friend, whose house was not many miles distant. Bragwell invited himself in the following manner: 'We have not had a comfortable day's chat for years,' said he, 'and as I am to look at a drove of lean beasts in your neighbourhood, I will take a bed at your house, and we will pass the evening in debating as we used to do. You know I always loved a bit of an argument, and am not reckoned to make the worst figure at our club: I had not, to be sure, such good learning as you had, because your father was a parson, and you got it for nothing: but I can bear my part pretty well for all that. When any man talks to me about his learning, I ask if it has helped him to get a good estate; if he says no, then I would not give him a rush for it; for of what use is all the learning in the world, if it does not make a man rich? But, as I was saying, I will come and see you to-morrow; but now don't let your wife put herself in a fuss for me: don't alter your own plain way; for I am not proud, I assure you, nor above my old friends; though, I thank God, I am pretty well in the world.'

To all this flourishing speech Mr. Worthy coolly answered, that certainly worldly prosperity ought never to make any man proud, since it is God who giveth strength to get riches, and without his blessing, *'tis in vain to rise up early, and to eat the bread of carefulness.*

About the middle of the next day Mr. Bragwell reached Mr. Worthy's neat and pleasant dwelling. He found every thing in it the reverse of his own. It had not so many ornaments, but it had more comforts. And when he saw his friend's good old-fashioned arm-chair in a warm corner, he gave a sigh to think how his own had been banished to make room for his daughter's piano forte. Instead of made flowers in glass cases, and tea-chests and screens too fine to be used, which he saw at home, and about which he was cautioned, and scolded as often as he came near them: his daughters watching his motions with the same anxiety as they would have watched the motions of a cat in a china shop. Instead of this, I say, he saw some neat shelves of good books for the service of the family, and a small medicine chest for the benefit of the poor.

Mrs. Worthy and her daughters had prepared a plain but neat and good dinner.—The tarts were so excellent, that Bragwell felt a secret kind of regret that his own daughters were too genteel to do any thing so very useful. Indeed he had been always unwilling to believe that any thing which was very proper and very necessary, could be so extremely vulgar and unbecoming as his daughters were always declaring it to be. And his late experience of the little comfort he found at home, inclined him now still more strongly to suspect that things were not so right there as he had been made to suppose. But it was in vain to speak; for his daughters constantly stopped his mouth by a favourite saying of theirs, which equally indicated affectation and vulgarity, that it was better to be out of the world than out of the fashion.

Soon after dinner the women went out to their several employments; and Mr. Worthy being left alone with his guest, the following discourse took place:

Bragwell. You have a couple of sober, pretty looking girls, Worthy; but I wonder they don't tiff off a little more. Why, my girls have as much fat and flour on their heads as would half maintain my reapers in suet pudding.

Worthy. Mr. Bragwell, in the management of my family, I don't consider what I might afford only, though that is one great point; but I consider also what is needful and becoming in a man of my station; for there are so many useful ways of laying out money, that I feel as if it were a sin to spend one unnecessary shilling. —Having had the blessing of a good education myself, I have been able to give the like advantage to my daughters. One of the best lessons I have taught them is, to know themselves; and one proof that they have learnt this lesson is, that they are not above any of the duties of their station. They read and write well, and when my eyes are bad, they keep my accounts in a very pretty manner. If I had put them to learn what you call *genteel things*, these might either have been of no use to them, and so both time and money thrown away; or they might proved worse than nothing to them by leading them into wrong notions, and wrong company. Though we do not wish them to do the laborious parts of the dairy work, yet they always assist their mother in the management of it. As to their appearance, they are every day nearly as you see them now, and on Sunday they are very neatly dressed, but it is always in a decent and modest way. There are no lappets, fringes, furbelows, and tawdry ornaments; no trains, turbans, and flounces, fluttering about my cheese and butter. And I should feel no vanity, but much mortification, if a stranger seeing farmer Worthy's daughters at church should ask who those fine ladies were.

Bragwell. Now I own I should like to have such a question asked concerning my daugh

ters. I like to make people stare and envy. It makes one feel oneself somebody. I never feel the pleasure of having handsome things so much as when I see they raise curiosity; and enjoy the envy of others as a fresh evidence of my own prosperity. But as to yourself, to be sure, you best know what you can afford; and indeed there is some difference between your daughters and the Miss Bragwells.

Worthy. For my part, before I engage in any expense, I always ask myself these two short questions; First, can I afford it?—Secondly, is it proper for me?

Bragwell. Do you so? Now I own I ask myself but one; for if I find I can afford it, I take care to make it proper for me. If I can pay for a thing, no one has a right to hinder me from having it.

Worthy. Certainly. But a man's own prudence, his love of propriety and sense of duty, ought to prevent him from doing an improper thing, as effectually as if there were somebody to hinder him.

Bragwell. Now, I think a man is a fool who is hindered from having any thing he has a mind to; unless indeed, he is in want of money to pay for it. I am no friend to debt. A poor man must want on.

Worthy. But I hope my children have not learnt to want any thing which is not proper for them. They are very industrious; they attend to business all day, and in the evening they sit down to their work and a good book. I take care that neither their reading nor conversation shall excite any desires or tastes unsuitable to their condition. They have little vanity, because the kind of knowledge they have is of too sober a sort to raise admiration; and from that vanity which attends a little smattering of frivolous accomplishments, I have secured them, by keeping them in total ignorance of all such. I think they live in the fear of God. I trust they are humble and pious, and I am sure they seem cheerful and happy. If I am sick, it is pleasant to see them dispute which shall wait upon me; for they say the maid cannot do it so tenderly as themselves.

This part of the discourse staggered Bragwell. An involuntary tear rushed into his eye. Vain as he was, he could not help feeling what a difference a religious and a worldly education made on the heart, and how much the former regulated even the natural temper. Another thing which surprised him was, that these girls living a life of domestic piety, without any public diversions, should be so very cheerful and happy; while his own daughters, who were never contradicted, and were indulged with continual amusements, were always sullen and ill-tempered. That they who were more humoured should be less grateful, and they who were more amused less happy, disturbed him much. He envied Worthy the tenderness of his children, though he would not own it, but turned it off thus:

Bragwell. But my girls are too smart to make mops of, that is the truth. Though ours is a lonely village, it is wonderful to see how soon they get the fashions. What with the discriptions in the magazines, and the pictures in the pocket-books, they have them in a twinkling and out-do their patterns all to nothing. I used to take in the Country Journal, because it was useful enough to see how oats went, the time of high water, and the price of stocks. But when my ladies came home, forsooth, I was soon whedled out of that, and forced to take a London paper, that tells a deal about the caps and feathers, and all the trumpery of the quality, and the French dress, and the French undress. When I want to know what hops are a bag, they are snatching the paper to see what violet soap is a pound. And as to the dairy, they never care how cow's milk goes, as long as they can get some stuff which they call milk of roses. Seeing them disputing violently the other day about cream and butter, I thought it a sign they were beginning to care for the farm, till I found it was cold cream for the hands, and jessamine butter for the hair.

Worthy. But do your daughters never read?

Bragwell. Read! I believe they do too. Why our Jack, the plough-boy, spends half his time in going to a shop in our market town, where they let out books to read with marble covers. And they sell paper with all manner of colours on the edges, and gim-cracks, and powder-puffs, and wash-balls, and cards without any pips, and every thing in the world that's genteel and of no use. 'Twas but the other day I met Jack with a basket full of these books; so having some time to spare, I sat down to see a little what they were about.

Worthy. Well, I hope you there found what was likely to improve your daughters, and teach them the true use of time.

Bragwell. O, as to that, you are pretty much out. I could make neither head nor tail of it; it was neither fish, flesh, nor good red-herring: it was all about my lord, and sir Harry, and the captain. But I never met with such nonsensical fellows in my life. Their talk was no more like that of my old landlord, who was a lord you know, nor the captain of our fensibles, than chalk is like cheese. I was fairly taken in at first, and began to think I had got hold of a *godly* book; for there was a deal about hope and despair, and death, and heaven, and angels, and torments, and everlasting happiness. But when I got a little on, I found there was no meaning in all these words, or if any, it was a bad meaning. Eternal misery, perhaps, only meant a moment's disappointment about a bit of a letter; and everlasting happiness meant two people talking nonsense together for five minutes. In short, I never met with such a pack of lies. The people talk such wild gibberish as no folks in their sober senses ever did talk; and the things that happen to them are not like the things that ever happen to me or any of my acquaintance. They are at home one minute, and beyond sea the next: beggars to-day, and lords to-morrow; waiting maids in the morning, and dutchesses at night. Nothing happens in a natural gradual way, as it does at home; they grow rich by the stroke of a wand, and poor by the magic of a word; the disinherited orphan of this hour is the overgrown heir of the next: now a bride and bridegroom turn out to be brother and sister, and the brother and sister prove to be no

relations at all. You and I, master Worthy, have worked hard many years, and think it very well to have scraped a trifle of money together; you, a few hundreds I suppose, and I a few thousands. But one would think every man in these books had the bank of England in his 'scrutoire. Then there is another thing which I never met with in true life. We think it pretty well, you know, if one has got one thing, and another has got another. I will tell you how I mean. You are reckoned sensible, our parson is learned, the squire is rich, I am rather generous, one of your daughters is pretty, and both mine are genteel. But in those books (except here and there one, whom they make worse than Satan himself) every man and woman's child of them, are all wise, and witty, and generous, and rich, and handsome, and genteel; and all to the last degree. Nobody is middling, or good in one thing, and bad in another, like my live acquaintance; but it is all up to the skies, or down to the dirt. I had rather read Tom Hickathrift, or Jack the giant Killer, a thousand times.

Worthy. You have found out, Mr. Bragwell, that many of these books are ridiculous; I will go farther, and say, that to me they appear wicked also: and I should account the reading of them a great mischief, especially to people in middling and low life, if I only took into the account the great loss of time such reading causes, and the aversion it leaves behind for what is more serious and solid. But this, though a bad part, is not the worst. These books give false views of human life. They teach a contempt for humble and domestic duties; for industry, frugality, and retirement. Want of youth and beauty is considered in them as ridiculous. Plain people, like you and me, are objects of contempt. Parental authority is set at naught. Nay, plots and contrivances against parents and guardians, fill half the volumes. They consider love as the great business of human life, and even teach that it is impossible for this love to be regulated or restrained; and to the indulgence of this passion every duty is therefore sacrificed. A country life, with a kind mother or a sober aunt, is described as a state of intolerable misery: and one would be apt to fancy from their painting, that a good country house is a prison, and a worthy father the jailor. Vice is set off with every ornament which can make it pleasing and amiable; while virtue and piety are made ridiculous, by tacking to them something that is silly or absurd. Crimes which would be considered as hanging matter at our county assizes—at least if I were a juryman, I should bring in the whole train of heroes, *Guilty—Death*—are here made to the appearance of virtue, by being mixed with some wild flight of unnatural generosity. Those crying sins, ADULTERY, GAMING, DUELS, and SELF-MURDER, are made so familiar, and the wickedness of them is so disguised by fine words and soft descriptions, that even innocent girls get loose to their abhorrence, and talk with complacency, *of things which should not be so much as named by them.*

I should not have said so much on this mischief (continued Mr. Worthy) from which I dare say, great folks fancy people in our station are safe enough, if I do not know and lament that this corrupt reading is now got down even among some of the lowest class. And it is an evil which is spreading every day. Poor industrious girls, who get their bread by the needle or the loom, spend half the night in listening to these books. Thus the labour of one girl is lost, and the minds of the rest are corrupted; for though their hands are employed in honest industry, which might help to preserve them from a life of sin, yet their hearts are at the very time polluted by scenes and descriptions which are too likely to plunge them into it: and when their vain weak heads compare the soft and delicious lives of the heroines in the book, with their own mean garb and hard labour, the effect is obvious; and I think I do not go too far when I say, that the vain and showy manner in which young women, who have to work for their bread, have taken to dress themselves, added to the poison they draw from these books, contribute together to bring them to destruction, more than almost any other cause. Now tell me, do not you think these wild books will hurt your daughters?

Bragwell. Why I do think they are grown full of schemes, and contrivances and whispers, that's the truth on't. Every thing is a secret. They always seem to be on the look-out for something, and when nothing comes on't, then they are sulky and disappointed. They will keep company with their equals: they despise trade and farming; and I own *I'm for the stuff.* I should not like them to marry any but a man of substance, if he was ever so smart. Now they will hardly sit down with a substantial country dealer. But if they hear of a recruiting party in our market-town, on goes the finery—off they are. Some flimsy excuse is patched up. They want something at the book-shop or the milliner's; because I suppose there is a chance for some Jack-a-napes of an ensign may be there buying sticking-plaster. In short, I do grow a little uneasy; for I should not like to see all I have saved thrown away on a knapsack.

So saying, they both rose and walked out to view the farm. Mr. Bragwell affected greatly to admire the good order of every thing he saw; but never forgot to compare it with something larger, and handsomer, or better of his own. It was easy to see that *self* was his standard of perfection in every thing. All he himself possessed gained some increased value in his eyes from being his; and in surveying the property of his friend, he derived food for his vanity, from things which seemed least likely to raise it. Every appearance of comfort, of success of merit, in any thing which belonged to Mr. Worthy led him to speak of some superior advantage of his own of the same kind: and it was clear that the chief part of the satisfaction he felt in walking over the farm of his friend, was caused by thinking how much larger his own was.

Mr. Worthy, who felt a kindness for him, which all his vanity could not cure, was always on the watch how to turn their talk on some useful point. And whenever people resolve to go into company with this view, it is commonly their own fault, if some opportunity of turning it to account does not offer.

He saw Bragwell was intoxicated with pride, and undone by success; and that his family was in the high road to ruin through mere prosperity. He thought that if some means could be found to open his eyes on his own character, to which he was now totally blind, it might be of the utmost service to him. The more Mr. Worthy reflected, the more he wished to undertake this kind office. He was not sure that Mr. Bragwell would bear it, but he was very sure it was his duty to attempt it. As Mr. Worthy was very humble himself, he had great patience and forbearance with the faults of others. He felt no pride at having escaped the errors into which they had fallen, for he knew who it was had *made him to differ*. He remembered that God had given him many advantages; a pious father and a religious education: this made him humble under a sense of his own sins, and charitable towards the sins of others, who had not the same privileges.

Just as he was going to try to enter into a very serious conversation with his guest, he was stopped by the appearance of his daughter, who told them supper was ready.—This interruption obliges me to break off also, and I shall reserve what follows to the next month, when I promise to give my readers the second part of this history.

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PART II.

A CONVERSATION.

Soon after supper Mrs. Worthy left the room with her daughters, at her husband's desire; for it was his intention to speak more plainly to Bragwell than was likely to be agreeable to him to hear before others. The two farmers being seated at their little table, each in a handsome old-fashioned great chair, Bragwell began.

'It is a great comfort neighbour Worthy, at a certain time of life to be got above the world: my notion is, that a man should labour hard the first part of his days, that he may then sit down and enjoy himself the remainder. Now, though I hate boasting, yet as you are my oldest friend, I am about to open my heart to you. Let me tell you then I reckon I have worked as hard as any man in my time, and that I now begin to think I have a right to indulge a little. I have got my money with character, and I mean to spend it with credit. I pay every one his own, I set a good example, I keep to my church, I serve God, I honour the king, and I obey the laws of the land.'

'This is doing a great deal indeed,' replied Mr. Worthy: 'but,' added he, 'I doubt that more goes to the making up all these duties than men are commonly aware of. Suppose then that you and I talk the matter over coolly; we have the evening before us.—What if we sit down together as two friends and examine one another.'

Bragwell, who loved argument, and who was not a little vain both of his sense and his morality, accepted the challenge, and gave his word that he would take in good part any thing that should be said to him.—Worthy was about to proceed, when Bragwell interrupted him for a moment, by saying—'But stop, friend, before we begin I wish you would remember that we have had a long walk, and I want a little refreshment; have you no liquor that is stronger than this cider? I am afraid it will give me a fit of the gout.'

Mr. Worthy immediately produced a bottle of wine, and another of spirits; saying, that though he drank neither spirits nor even wine himself, yet his wife always kept a little of each as a provision in case of sickness or accidents.

Farmer Bragwell preferred the brandy, and began to taste it. 'Why,' said he, 'this is no better than English; I always use foreign myself.'—'I bought this for foreign,' said Mr. Worthy.—'No, no, it is English spirits I assure you; but I can put you into a way to get foreign nearly as cheap as English.' Mr. Worthy replied that he thought that was impossible.

Bragwell. O no; there are ways and means—a word to the wise—there is an acquaintance of mine that lives upon the south coast—you are a particular friend and I will get you half-a-dozen gallons for a trifle.

Worthy. Not if it be smuggled, Mr. Bragwell, though I should get it for sixpence a bottle.—'Ask no questions,' said the other, 'I never say any thing to any one, and who is the wiser?'—'And so this is your way of obeying the laws of the land,' said Mr. Worthy—'here is a fine specimen of your morality.'

Bragwell. Come, come, don't make a fuss about trifles. If *every one* did it indeed it would be another thing; but as to *my* getting a little good brandy cheap, why that can't hurt the revenue much.

Worthy. Pray Mr. Bragwell what should you think of a man who would dip his hand into a bag and take out a few guineas?

Bragwell. Think? why I think that he should be hanged to be sure.

Worthy. But suppose that bag stood in the king's treasury?

Bragwell. In the king's treasury! worse and worse! What, rob the king's treasury! Well, I hope if any one has done it, the robber will be taken up and executed; for I suppose we shall all be taxed to pay the damage.

Worthy. Very true. If one man takes money out of the treasury, others must be obliged to pay the more into it. But what think you if the fellow should be found to have stopped some money *in its way* to the treasury, instead of taking it out of the bag after it got there?

Bragwell. Guilty, Mr. Worthy; it is all the same, in my opinion. If I were judge I would hang him without benefit of clergy.

Worthy. Hark ye, Mr. Bragwell, he that deals in smuggled brandy is the man who takes to himself the king's money in its way to the treasury, and he as much robs the government as if he dipt his hands into a bag of guineas in the treasury chamber. It comes to the same thing exactly. Here Bragwell seemed a little offended, and exclaimed—'What, Mr. Worthy! do you pretend to say I am not an honest man because I like to get my brandy as cheap as I can? and because I like to save a shilling to my family? Sir, I repeat it; I do my duty

and my neighbour. I say the Lord's prayer most days, I go to church on Sundays, I repeat my creed, and keep the ten commandments; and though I now and then get a little brandy cheap, yet upon the whole, I will venture to say, I do as much as can be expected of any man, and more than the generality.'

Worthy. Come then since you say you keep the commandments, you cannot be offended if I ask you whether you understand them.

Bragwell. To be sure I do. I dare say I do: look'ye, Mr. Worthy, I don't pretend to much reading, I was not bred to it as you were. If my father had been a parson, I fancy I should have made as good a figure as some other folks, but I hope good sense and *a good heart* may teach a man his duty without much scholarship.

Worthy. To come to the point; let us now go through the ten commandments, and let us take along with us those explanations of them which our Saviour gave us in his sermon on the mount.

Bragwell. Sermon on the mount! why the ten commandments are in the 20th chapter of Exodus. Come, come, Mr. Worthy, I know where to find the commandments as well as you do; for it happens that I am church-warden, and I can see from the altar-piece where the ten commandments are, without your telling me, for my pew directly faces it.

Worthy. But I advise you to read the sermon on the mount, that you may see the full meaning of them.

Bragwell. What! do you want to make me believe there are two ways of keeping the commandments?

Worthy. No; but there may be two ways of understanding them.

Bragwell. Well, I am not afraid to be put to the proof; I defy any man to say I do not keep at least all the four first that are on the left side of the altar-piece.

Worthy. If you can prove that, I shall be more ready to believe you observe those of the other table; for he who does his duty to God, will be likely to do his duty to his neighbour also.

Bragwell. What! do you think that I serve two Gods? Do you think then that I make graven images, and worship stocks or stones? Do you take me for a papist or an idolater?

Worthy. Don't triumph quite so soon, master Bragwell. Pray is there nothing in the world you prefer to God, and thus make an idol of? Do you not love your money, or your lands, or your crops, or your cattle, or your own will, or your own way, rather better than you love God? Do you never think of these with more pleasure than you think of him, and follow them more eagerly than your religious duty?

Bragwell. O! there's nothing about that in the 20th chapter of Exodus.

Worthy. But Jesus Christ has said, 'He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.' Now it is certainly a man's duty to love his father and his mother; nay, it would be wicked not to love them, and yet we must not love even these more than our Creator and our Saviour. Well, I think on this principle, your heart pleads guilty to the breach of the first and second commandments; let us proceed to the third.

Bragwell. That is about swearing, is it not?

Mr. Worthy, who had observed Bragwell guilty of much profaneness in using the name of his Maker, (though all such offensive words have been avoided in writing this history), now told him that he had been waiting the whole day for an opportunity to reprove him for his frequent breach of the third commandment.

'Good L—d! I break the third commandment!' said Bragwell; 'no indeed, hardly ever, I once used to swear a little to be sure, but I vow I never do it now, except now and then when I happen to be in a passion: aud in such a case, why, good G—d, you know the sin is with those who provoke me, and not with me; but, upon my soul, I don't think I have sworn an oath these three months, no not I, faith, as I hope to be saved.'

Worthy. And yet you have broken this holy law not less than five or six times in the last speech you have made.

Bragwell. Lord bless me! Sure you mistake. Good heavens, Mr. Worthy, I call G—d to witness, I have neither cursed nor swore since I have been in the house.

Worthy. Mr. Bragwell, this is the way in which many who call themselves very good sort of people deceive themselves. What! is it no profanation of the name of your Maker to use it lightly, irreverently and familiarly as you have done? Our Saviour has not only told us not to swear by the immediate name of God, but he has said, 'swear not at all, neither by heaven nor by the earth,' and in order to hinder our inventing any other irreligious exclamations or expressions, he has even added, 'but let your communications be yea, yea, and nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than this simple affirmation and denial cometh of evil.' Nay more, so greatly do I reverence that high and holy name, that I think even some good people have it too frequently in their mouths; and that they might convey the idea without the word.

Bragwell. Well, well, I must take a little more care, I believe. I vow to heaven I did not know there had been so much harm in it; but my daughters seldom speak without using some of these words, and yet they wanted to make me believe the other day that it was monstrous vulgar to swear.

Worthy. Women, even gentlewomen, who ought to correct this evil habit in their fathers, and husbands, and children, are too apt to encourage it by their own practice. And indeed they betray the profaneness of their own minds also by it; for none who venerate the holy name of God, can either profane it in this manner themselves, or hear others do so without being exceedingly pained at it.

Bragwell. Well, since you are so hard upon me, I believe I must e'en give up this point—so let us pass on to the next, and here I tread upon sure ground; for as sharp as you are upon me, you can't accuse me of being a Sabbath breaker, since I go to church every Sunday of my life, unless on some very extraordinary occasion.

Worthy. For those occasions the Gospel allows, by saying, 'the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.' Our own

sickness, or attending on the sickness of others, are lawful impediments.

Bragwell. Yes, and I am now and then obliged to look at a drove of beasts, or to go a journey, or take some medicine, or perhaps some friend may call upon me, or it may be very cold, or very hot, or very rainy.

Worthy. Poor excuses! Mr. Bragwell. Do you call these lawful impediments? I am afraid they will not pass for such on the day of judgment. But how is the rest of your Sunday spent?

Bragwell. O why, I assure you I often go to church in the afternoon also, and even if I am ever so sleepy.

Worthy. And so you finish your nap at church, I suppose.

Bragwell. Why as to that, to be sure we do contrive to have something a little nicer than common for dinner on a Sunday: in consequence of which one eats, you know a little more than ordinary; and having nothing to do on that day, has more leisure to take a cheerful glass; and all these things will make one a little heavy you know.

Worthy. And don't you take a little ride in the morning, and look at your sheep when the weather is good; and so fill your mind just before you go to church with thoughts of them; and when the weather is bad, don't you settle an account? or write a few letters of business after church?

Bragwell. I can't say but I do; but that is nothing to any body, as long as I set a good example by keeping to my church.

Worthy. And how do you pass your Sunday evenings?

Bragwell. My wife and daughters go a visiting Sunday afternoons. My daughters are glad to get out at any rate; and as to my wife, she says that being ready dressed, it is a pity to lose the opportunity: besides, it saves her time on a week day; so then you see I have it all my own way, and when I have got rid of the ladies, who are ready to faint at the smell of tobacco, I can venture to smoke a pipe, and drink a sober glass of punch with half a dozen friends.

Worthy. Which punch being made of smuggled brandy, and drunk on the Lord's-day, and very vain, as well as profane and worldly company, you are enabled to break both the law of God, and that of your country at a stroke: and I suppose when you are got together, you speak of your cattle, or of your crops, after which perhaps you talk over a few of your neighbours' faults, and then you brag a little of your own wealth or your own achievements.

Bragwell. Why you seem to know us so well, that any one would think you had been sitting behind the curtain; and yet you are a little mistaken too; for I think we have hardly said a word for several of our last Sundays on any thing but politics.

Worthy. And do you find that you much improve your Christian charity by that subject?

Bragwell. Why to be sure we do quarrel till we are very near fighting, that is the worst on't.

Worthy. And then you call names, and swear a little I suppose.

Bragwell. Why when one is contradicted and put in a passion you know, and when people, especially if they are one's inferiors, won't adopt all one's opinions, flesh and blood can't bear it.

Worthy. And when all your friends are gone home, what becomes of the rest of the evening?

Bragwell. That is just as it happens, sometimes I read the newspaper; and as one is generally most tired on the days one does nothing, I go to bed earlier on Sundays than on other days, that I may be more fit to get up to my business the next morning.

Worthy. So you shorten Sunday as much as you can, by cutting off a bit at both ends, I suppose; for I take it for granted, you lie a little later in the morning.

Bragwell. Come, come, we shan't get through the whole ten to-night, if you stand snubbing one at this rate. You may pass over the fifth; for my father and mother have been dead ever since I was a boy, so I am clear of that scrape.

Worthy. There are, however, many relative duties included in that commandment; unkindness to all kindred is forbidden.

Bragwell. O, if you mean my turning off my nephew Tom, the ploughboy, you must not blame me for that, it was all my wife's fault. He was as good a lad as ever lived to be sure, and my own brother's son; but my wife could not bear that a boy in a carter's frock should be about the house, calling her aunt. We quarrelled like dog and cat about it; and when he was turned away she and I did not speak for a week.

Worthy. Which was a fresh breach of the commandment; a worthy nephew turned out of doors, and a wife not spoken to for a week, are no very convincing proofs of your observance of the fifth commandment.

Bragwell. Well, I long to come to the sixth, for you don't think I commit murder I hope.

Worthy. I am not sure of that.

Bragwell. Murder! what, I kill any body?

Worthy. Why, the laws of the land, indeed, and the disgrace attending it, are almost enough to keep any man from actual murder; let me ask, however, do you never give way to unjust anger, and passion, and revenge? as for instance, do you never feel your resentment kindle against some of the politicians who contradict you on a Sunday night? and do you never push your animosity against somebody that has affronted you, further than the occasion can justify?

Bragwell. Hark'ee, Mr. Worthy, I am a man of substance, and no man shall offend me without my being even with him. So as to injuring a man, if he affronts me first, there's nothing but good reason in that.

Worthy. Very well! only bear in mind that you wilfully break this commandment, whether you abuse your servant, are angry at your wife, watch for a moment to revenge an injury on your neighbour, or even wreak your passion on a harmless beast; for you have then the seeds of murder working in your breast; and if there were no law, no gibbet, to check you, and no fear of disgrace neither, I am not sure where you would stop.

Bragwell. Why, Mr. Worthy, you have a strange way of explaining the commandments;

so you set me down for a murderer, merely because I bear hatred to a man who has done me a hurt, and am glad to do him a like injury in my turn.—I am sure I should want spirit if I did not.

Worthy. I go by the Scripture rule, which says, 'he that hateth his brother is a murderer; and again, 'pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.' Besides, Mr. Bragwell, you made it a part of your boast that you said the Lord's prayer every day, wherein you pray to God to forgive you your trespasses as you forgive them that trespass against you.—If therefore you do not forgive them that trespass against you, in that case you daily pray that your own trespasses may never be forgiven.—Now own the truth; did you last night lie down in a spirit of forgiveness and charity with the whole world!

Bragwell. Yes, I am in charity with the whole world in general; because the greater part of it has never done me any harm. But I won't forgive old Giles, who broke down my new hedge yesterday for firing.—Giles who used to be so honest!

Worthy. And yet you expect that God will forgive you who have broken down his sacred laws, and have so often robbed him of his right —you have robbed him of the honour due unto his name—you have robbed him of his holy day by doing your own work, and finding your own pleasure in it—you have robbed his poor, particularly in the instance of Giles, by withholding from them, as overseer, such assistance as should prevent their being driven to the sin of stealing.

Bragwell. Why, you are now charging me with other men's sins as well as my own.

Worthy. Perhaps the sins which we cause other men to commit, through injustice, inconsideration, and evil example, may dreadfully swell the sum of our responsibility in the great day of account.

Bragwell. Well, come let us make haste and get through these commandments. The next is, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' Thank God, neither I nor my family can be said to break the seventh commandment.

Worthy. Here again, remember how Christ himself hath said, 'whoso looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.' These are no farfetched expressions of mine, Mr. Bragwell, they are the words of Jesus Christ. I hope you will not charge him with having carried things too far; for if you do, you charge him with being mistaken in the religion he taught; and this can only be accounted for, by supposing him an impostor.

Bragwell. Why, upon my word, Mr. Worthy, I don't like these sayings of his which you quote upon me so often, and that is the truth of it, and I can't say I feel much disposed to believe them.

Worthy. I hope you believe in Jesus Christ. I hope you believe that creed of your's, which you also boasted of repeating so regularly.

Bragwell. Well, well, I'll believe any thing you say, rather than stand quarrelling with you.

Worthy. I hope then, you will allow, that since it is adultery to look at a woman with even an irregular thought, it follows from the same rule, that all immodest dress in your daughters, or indecent jests and double meanings in yourself; all loose songs or novels; and all diversions also which have a like dangerous tendency, are forbidden by the seventh commandment; for it is most plain from what Christ has said, that it takes in not only the act, but the inclination, the desire, the indulged imagination; the act is only the last and highest degree of any sin; the topmost round, as it were, of a ladder, to which all the lower rounds are only as so many steps and stages.

Bragwell. Strict indeed! Mr. Worthy; but let us go on to the next; you won't pretend to say *I steal*; Mr. Bragwell, I trust, was never known to rob on the highway, to break open his neighbour's house, or to use false weights or measures.

Worthy. No, nor have you ever been under any temptation to do it, and yet there are a thousand ways of breaking the eighth commandment besides actual stealing. For instance do you never hide the faults of the goods you sell, and heighten the faults of those you buy? Do you never take advantage of an ignorant dealer, and ask more for a thing than it is worth? Do you never turn the distressed circumstances of a man who has something to sell, to your own unfair benefit; and thus act as unjustly by him as if you had stolen? Do you never cut off a shilling from a workman's wages, under the pretence which your conscience can't justify? Do you never pass off an unsound horse for a sound one? Do you never conceal the real rent of your estate from the overseers, and thereby rob the poor-rates of their legal due?

Bragwell. Pooh! these things are done every day. I shan't go to set up for being better than my neighbours in these sort of things; these little matters will pass muster—I don't set up for a reformer—If I am as good as the rest of my neighbours, no man can call me to account, I am not worse, I trust, and don't pretend to be better.

Worthy. You must be tried hereafter at the bar of God, and not by a jury of your fellow creatures; and the Scriptures are given us, in order to show by what rule we shall be judged. How many or how few do as you do, is quite aside from the question; Jesus Christ has even told us to strive to enter in the *strait* gate; so that we ought rather to take fright, from our being like the common run of people, than to take comfort from our being so.

Bragwell. Come, I don't like all this close' work—it makes a man feel I don't know how —I don't find myself so happy as I did—I don't like this fishing in troubled waters—I'm as merry as the day is long when I let these things alone.—I'm glad we are got to the ninth. But I suppose I shall be lugged in there too, head and shoulders. Any one now who did not know me, would really think I was a great sinner, by your way of putting things: I don't bear false witness however.

Worthy. You mean, I suppose, you would not swear away any man's life falsely before a magistrate, but do you take equal care not to

slander or backbite him? Do you never represent a good action of a man you have quarrelled with, as if it were a bad one? or do you never make a bad one worse than it is, by your manner of telling it? Even when you invent no false circumstances, do you never give such a colour to those you relate, as to leave a false impression on the mind of the hearers? Do you never twist a story so as to make it tell a little better for yourself, and a little worse for your neighbour, than truth and justice warrant?

Bragwell. Why, as to that matter, all this is only natural.

Worthy. Ay, much too natural to be right, I doubt. Well, now we are got to the last of the commandments.

Bragwell. Yes, I have run the gauntlet finely through them all; you will bring me in guilty here, I suppose, for the pleasure of going through with it; for you condemn without judge or jury, master Worthy.

Worthy. The culprit, I think has hitherto pleaded guilty to the evidence brought against him. The tenth commandment, however, goes to the root and principle of evil, it dives to the bottom of things; this command checks the first rising of sin in the heart; teaches us to strangle it in the birth, as it were, before it breaks out in those acts which are forbidden: as, for instance, every man covets before he proceeds to steal; nay, many covet, knowing they can do it with impunity, who dare not steal, lest they should suffer for it.

Bragwell. Why, look'ee, Mr. Worthy, I don't understand these new fashioned explanations; one should not have a grain of sheer goodness left, if every thing one does is to be fritted away at this rate. I am not, I own, quite so good as I thought, but if what you say were true, I should be so miserable, I should not know what to do with myself.—Why, I tell you, all the world may be said to break the commandments at this rate.

Worthy. Very true. All the world, and I myself also, are but too apt to break them, if not in the letter, at least in the spirit of them. Why then all the world are (as the Scripture expresses it) 'guilty before God.' And if guilty, they should own they are guilty, and not stand up and justify themselves, as you do, Mr. Bragwell.

Bragwell. Well, according to my notion, I am a very honest man, and honesty is the sum and substance of all religion, say I.

Worthy. All truth, honesty, justice, order, and obedience grow out of the Christian religion. The true Christian acts, at all times, and on all occasions, from the pure and spiritual principle of love to God and Christ.—On this principle, he is upright in his dealings, true to his word, kind to the poor, helpful to the oppressed. In short, if he truly loves God, he *must* do justice, and *can't help* loving mercy. Christianity is a uniform consistent thing. It does not allow us to make up for the breach of one part of God's law, by our strictness in observing another. There is no sponge in one duty, that can wipe out the spot of another sin.

Bragwell. Well, but at this rate, I should be always puzzling and blundering, and should never know for certain whether I was right or not; whereas I am now quite satisfied with myself, and have no doubts to torment me.

Worthy. One way of knowing whether we really desire to obey the whole law of God is this; when we find we have as great a regard to that part of it, the breach of which does not touch our own interest, as to that part which does. For instance, a man robs me; I am in a violent passion with him, and when it is said to me, doest thou well to be angry? I answer, I do well. *Thou shalt not steal* is a law of God, and this fellow has broken that law. Ay, but says conscience, 'tis *thy own property* which is in question. He has broken *thy* hedge, he has stolen *thy* sheep, he has taken *thy* purse.—Art thou therefore sure whether it is his violation of thy property, or of God's law which provokes thee? I will put a second case: I hear another swear most grievously—or I meet him coming drunk out of an ale-house; or *I find him singing* a loose, profane song. If I am not as much grieved for this blasphemer, or this drunkard, as I was for this robber; if I do not take the same pains to bring him to a sense of his sin, which I did to bring the robber to justice, 'how dwelleth the love of God in me?' Is it not clear that I value my own sheep more than God's commandments? That I prize my purse more than I love my Maker? In short, whenever I find out that I am more jealous for my own property than for God's law; more careful about my own reputation than *his* honour, I always suspect I am got upon wrong ground, and that even my right actions are not proceeding from a right principle.

Bragwell. Why, what in the world would you have me do? It would distract me, if I must run up every little action to its spring, in this manner.

Worthy. You must confess that your sins *are* sins.—You must not merely call them sins, while you see no guilt in them; but you must confess them so as to hate and detest them; so as to be habitually humbled under the sense of them; so as to trust for salvation not in your freedom from them, but in the mercy of a Saviour; and so as to make it the chief business of your life to contend against them, and in the main to forsake them. And remember, that if you seek for a deceitful gayety, rather than a well grounded cheerfulness; if you prefer a false security to final safety, and now go away to your cattle and your farm, and dismiss the subject from your thoughts, lest it should make you uneasy, I am not sure that this simple discourse may not appear against you at the day of account, as a fresh proof that you 'loved darkness rather than light,' and so increase your condemnation.

Mr. Bragwell was more affected than he cared to own. He went to bed with less spirits and more humility than usual. He did not, however, care to let Mr. Worthy see the impression which it had made upon him; but at parting next morning, he shook him by the hand more cordially than usual, and made him promise to return his visit in a short time.

What befel Mr. Bragwell and his family on

his going home may, perhaps, make the subject of a future part of this history.

PART III.

THE VISIT RETURNED.

Mr. Bragwell, when he returned home from his visit to Mr. Worthy, as recorded in the second part of this history, found that he was not quite so happy as he had formerly been. The discourses of Mr. Worthy had broken in not a little on his comfort. And he began to suspect that he was not so completely in the right as his vanity had led him to believe. He seemed also to feel less satisfaction in the idle gentility of his own daughters, since he had been witness to the simplicity, modesty, and usefulness of those of Mr. Worthy. And he could not help seeing that the vulgar violence of his wife did not produce so much family happiness at home, as the humble piety and quiet diligence of Mrs. Worthy produced in the house of his friend.

Happy would it have been for Mr. Bragwell, if he had followed up those new convictions of his own mind, which would have led him to struggle against the power of evil principles in himself, and to have controlled the force of evil habits in his family. But his convictions were just strong enough to make him uneasy under his errors, without driving him to reform them. The slight impression soon wore off, and he fell back into his old practices. Still his esteem for Mr. Worthy was not at all abated by the plain dealing of that honest friend. It is true, he dreaded his piercing eye: he felt that his example held out a constant reproof to himself. Yet such is the force of early affection and rooted reverence, that he longed to see him at his house. This desire, indeed, as is commonly the case, was made up of mixed motives. He wished for the pleasure of his friend's company; he longed for that favourite triumph of a vulgar mind, an opportunity of showing him his riches; and he thought it would raise his credit in the world to have a man of Mr. Worthy's character at his house.

Mr. Bragwell, it is true, still went on with the same eagerness in gaining money, and the same ostentation in spending it. But though he was as covetous as ever, he was not quite so sure that it was right to be so. While he was actually engaged abroad indeed, in transactions with his dealers, he was not very scrupulous about the means by which he *got* his money; and while he was indulging in festivity with his friends at home, he was easy enough as to the manner in which he *spent* it. But a man can neither be making bargains, nor making feasts always; there must be some intervals between these two great objects for which worldly men may be said to live; and in some of these intervals the most worldly form, perhaps, some random plans of amendment. And though many a one may say in the fulness of enjoyment, 'soul take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry;' yet hardly any man, perhaps, allows himself to say, even in the most secret moments, I will *never* retire from business—I will *never* repent—I will *never* think of death—Eternity shall *never* come into my thoughts. The most that such a one probably ventures to say is, I need not repent *yet;* I will continue such a sin a little longer; it will be time enough to think on the next world when I am no longer fit for the business or the pleasures of this.

Such was the case with Bragwell. He set up in his mind a general distant sort of resolution, that *some years hence*, when he should be a *few years older*, a *few* thousands richer; when a few more of his *present schemes should be completed*, he would then think of altering his course of life. He would then certainly set about spending a religious old age; he would reform some practices in his dealings, or, perhaps, quit business entirely; he would think about reading good books, and when he had completed such a purchase, he would even begin to give something to the poor; but at present he really had little to spare for charity. The very reason why he should have given more was just the cause he assigned for not giving at all, namely the *hardness of the times.* The true grand source of charity, self-denial, never come into his head. *Spend less* that you may *save* more, he would have thought a shrewd maxim enough. But *spend less* that you may *spare more*, never entered into his book of Proverbs.

At length the time came when Mr. Worthy had promised to return his visit. It was indeed a little hastened by notice that Mr. Bragwell would have in the course of the week, a piece of land to sell by auction; and though Mr. Worthy believed the price was likely to be above his pocket, yet he knew it was an occasion which would be likely to bring the principal farmers of that neighbourhood together, some of whom he wanted to meet. And it was on this occasion that Mr. Bragwell prided himself, that he should show his neighbours so sensible a man as his dear friend Mr. Worthy.

Worthy arrived at his friend's house on the Saturday, time enough to see the house, and garden, and grounds of Mr. Bragwell by daylight. He saw with pleasure (for he had a warm and generous heart) those evident signs of his friend's prosperity; but as he was a man of sober mind, and was a most exact dealer in truth, he never allowed his tongue the license of immodest commendation, which he used to say either savoured of flattery or envy. Indeed he never rated mere worldly things so highly as to bestow upon them undue praise. His calm approbation somewhat disappointed the vanity of Mr. Bragwell, who could not help secretly suspecting that his friend, as good a man as he was, was not quite free from envy. He felt, however, very much inclined to forgive this jealousy, which he feared the sight of his ample property, and handsome habitation must naturally awaken in the mind of a man whose own possessions were so inferior. He practised the usual trick of ordinary and vulgar minds, that of pretending himself to find some fault with those things which were particularly deserving praise, when he found Worthy disposed to pass them over in silence.

When they came in to supper, he affected to

talk of the comforts of Mr. Worthy's *little* parlour, by way of calling his attention to his own large one. He repeated the word *snug*, as applied to every thing at Mr. Worthy's, with the plain design to make comparisons favourable to his own more ample domains. He contrived, as he passed by his chair, by a seeming accident to push open the door of a large beaufet in the parlour, in which all the finery was most ostentatiously set out to view. He protested with a look of satisfaction which belied his words, that for his part he did not care a farthing for all this trumpery: and then smiling and rubbing his hands, added, with an air of no small importance, what a good thing it is though, for people of substance, that the tax on plate is taken off. You are a happy man, Mr. Worthy, you do not feel these things; tax or no tax, it is all the same to you. He took care during this speech, by a cast of his eye to direct Mr. Worthy's attention to a great profusion of the brightest cups, salvers, and tankards, and other shining ornaments, which crowded the beaufet. Mr. Worthy gravely answered Mr. Bragwell, it was indeed a tax which could not affect so plain a man as myself: but as it fell on a mere luxury and therefore could not hurt the poor, I was always sorry that it could not be made productive enough to be continued. A man in my middling situation, who is contented with a good glass of beer, poured from a handsome earthen mug, the glass, the mug, and the beer, all of English manufacture, will be but little disturbed at taxes on plate or on wine; but he will regret, as I do, that many of these taxes are so much evaded, that new taxes are continually brought on to make up the deficiencies of the old.

During supper the young ladies sat in disdainful silence, not deigning to bestow the smallest civility on so plain a man as Mr. Worthy. They left the room with their mamma as soon as possible, being impatient to get away to ridicule their father's old-fashioned friend at full liberty.

The Dance; or, the Christmas Merry-making; exemplifying the effects of modern education in a farm house.

As soon as they were gone, Mr. Worthy asked Bragwell how his family comforts stood, and how his daughters, who, he said, were really fine young women, went on. O, as to that, replied Bragwell, pretty much like other men's handsome daughters, I suppose, that is, worse and worse. I really begin to apprehend that their fantastical notions have gained such a head, that after all the money I have scraped together, I shall never get them well married.

Betsey has just lost as good an offer as any girl could desire; young Wilson, an honest substantial grazier as any in the country. He not only knows every thing proper for his station, but is pleasing in his behaviour, and a pretty scholar into the bargain; he reads history-books and voyages of a winter's evening, to his infirm father, instead of going to the card-assembly in our town; he neither likes drinking nor sporting, and is a sort of a favourite with our parson; because he takes in the weekly numbers of a fine Bible with cuts, and subscribes to the Sunday-school, and makes a fuss about helping the poor; and sets up soup-shops, and sells bacon at an underprice, and gives odd bits of ground to his labourers to help them in these dear times, as they call them; but I think they are good times for *us*, Mr. Worthy.

Well, for all this, Betsey only despised him, and laughed at him; but as he is both handsome, and rich, I thought she might come round at last; and so I invited him to come and stay a day or two at Christmas, when we have always a little sort of merry-making here. But it would not do. He scorned to talk that palavering stuff which she has been used to in the marble-covered books I told you of. He told her, indeed, that it would be the happiness of his heart to live with her; which I own I thought was as much as could be expected of any man. But Miss had no notion of marrying any one who was only desirous of living with her. No, no, forsooth, her lover must declare himself ready to die for her, which honest Wilson was not such a fool as to offer to do. In the afternoon, however, he got a little into her favour by making out a rebus or two in the Lady's Diary; and she condescended to say, she did not think Mr. Wilson had been so good a scholar; but he soon spoilt all again. We had a little dance in the evening. The young man, though he had not much taste for those sort of gambols, yet thought he could foot it a little in the old fashioned way. So he asked Betsey to be his partner. But when he asked what dance they should call, Miss drew up her head, and in a strange gibberish, said she should dance nothing but a *Menuet de la Cour*, and ordered him to call it. Wilson stared, and honestly told her she must call it herself; for he could neither spell nor pronounce such outlandish words, nor assist in such an outlandish performance. I burst out a laughing, and told him, I supposed it something like questions and commands; and if so, that was much merrier than dancing. Seeing her partner standing stock still, and not knowing how to get out of the scrape, the girl began by herself, and fell to swimming, and sinking, and capering, and flourishing, and posturing, for all the world just like the man on the slack rope at our fair. But seeing Wilson standing like a stuck pig, and we all laughing at her, she resolved to wreak her malice upon him; so, with a look of rage and disdain, she advised him to go down country bumpkin, with the dairy maid, who would make a much fitter partner, as well as wife, for him, than she could do.

I am quite of your mind, Miss, said he, with more spirit than I thought was in him; you may make a good partner for a dance, but you would make a sad one to go through life with. I will take my leave of you, Miss, with this short story. I had lately a pretty large concern in hay-jobbing, which took me to London. I waited a good while in the Hay-Market for my dealer, and, to pass away the time, I stepped into a sort of foreign singing play-house there, where I was grieved to the heart to see young women painted and dizened out, and capering away just as you have been doing. I thought it bad enough in them, and wondered the qua-

lity could be entertained with such indecen mummery. But little did I think to meet with the same paint, finery, and posturing tricks in a farm house. I will never marry a woman who despises me, nor the station in which I should place her, and so I take my leave.—Poor girl, how she *was* provoked! to be publicly refused, and turned off, as it were, by a grazier! But it was of use to some of the other girls, who have not held up their heads quite so high since, nor painted quite so red, but have condescended to speak to their equals.

But how I run on! I forget it is Saturday night, and that I ought to be paying my workmen, who are all waiting for me without.

Saturday Night; or the Workmen's Wages.

As soon as Mr. Bragwell had done paying his men, Mr. Worthy, who was always ready to extract something useful from accidental circumstances, said to him, I have made it a habit, and I hope not an unprofitable one, of trying to turn to some moral use, not only all the events of daily life, but all the employments of it too. And though it occurs so often, I hardly know one that sets me thinking more seriously than the ordinary business you have been discharging.—Ay, said Bragwell, it sets me thinking too, and seriously, as you say, when I observe how much the price of wages is increased.—Yes, yes, you are ready enough to think of that, said Worthy, but you say not a word of how much the value of your land is increased, and that the more you pay, the more you can afford to pay. But the thoughts I spoke of are quite of another cast.

When I call in my labourers, on a Saturday night, to pay them, it often brings to my mind the great and general day of account, when I, and you, and all of us, shall be called to our grand and awful reckoning, when we shall go to receive *our* wages, master and servants, farmer and labourer. When I see that one of my men has failed of the wages he should have received, because he has been idling at a fair; another has lost a day by a drinking-bout, a third confesses that, though he had task-work, and might have earned still more, yet he has been careless, and has not his full pay to receive; this, I say, sometimes sets me on thinking whether I also have made the most of my time. And when I come to pay even the more diligent, who have worked all the week, when I reflect that even these have done no more than it was their duty to do, I cannot help saying to myself, night is come, Saturday night is come. No repentance, or diligence on the part of these poor men can now make a bad week's work good. This week has gone into eternity. To-morrow is the season of rest; working time is over. 'There is no knowledge nor device in the grave.' My life also will soon be swallowed up in eternity; soon the space allotted me for diligence, for labour, will be over. Soon will the grand question be asked, 'What hast thou done?—Give an account of thy stewardship. Didst thou use thy working days to the end for which they were given?' With some such thoughts I commonly go to bed, and they help to quicken me to a keener diligence for the next week.

Some account of a Sunday in Mr. Bragwell's family.

Mr. Worthy had been for so many years used to the sober ways of his own well-ordered family, that he greatly disliked to pass a Sunday in any house of which Religion was not the governing principle. Indeed, he commonly ordered his affairs, and regulated his journies with an eye to this object. To pass a Sunday in an irreligious family, said he, is always unpleasant, often unsafe.—I seldom find I can do them any good, and they may perhaps do me some harm. At least, I am giving a sanction to their manner of passing it, if I pass it in the same manner. If I reprove them, I subject myself to the charge of singularity, and of being righteous over-much; if I do *not* reprove them, I confirm and strengthen them in evil. And whether I reprove them or not, I certainly partake of their guilt, if I spend it as they do.

He had, however, so strong a desire to be useful to Mr. Bragwell, that he at length determined to break through his common practice, and pass the Sunday at his house. Mr. Worthy was surprised to find that though the church bell was going, the breakfast was not ready, and expressed his wonder how this could be the case in so industrious a family. Bragwell made some awkward excuses. He said his wife worked her servants so hard all the week, that even she, as notable as she was, a little relaxed from the strictness of her demands on Sunday mornings; and he owned that in a general way, no one was up early enough for church. He confessed that his wife commonly spent the morning in making puddings, pies, syllabubs, and cakes, to last through the week; as Sunday was the only leisure time she and her maids had. Mr. Worthy soon saw an uncommon bustle in the house. All hands were busy. It was nothing but baking, and boiling, and stewing, and frying, and roasting, and running, and scolding, and eating. The boy was kept from church to clean the plate, the man to gather the fruit, the mistress to make the cheesecakes, the maids to dress the dinner, and the young ladies to dress themselves.

The truth was, Mrs. Bragwell, who had heard much of the order and good management of Mr. Worthy's family, but who looked down with disdain upon them as far less rich than herself, was resolved to indulge her vanity on the present occasion. She was determined to be even with Mrs. Worthy, in whose praises Bragwell had been so loud, and felt no small pleasure in the hope of making her guest uneasy, in comparing her with his own wife, when he should be struck dumb with the display both of her skill and her wealth. Mr. Worthy was indeed struck to behold as large a dinner as he had been used to see at a justice's meeting. He, whose frugal and pious wife had accustomed him only to such a plain Sunday's dinner as could be dressed without keeping any one from church, when he surveyed the loaded table of his friend, instead of feeling that envy which the grand preparations were meant to raise,

felt nothing but disgust at the vanity of his friend's wife, mixed with much thankfulness for the piety and simplicity of his own.

After having made the dinner wait a long time, the miss Bragwells marched in, dressed as if they were going to the assize-ball; they looked very scornfully at having been so hurried; though they had been dressing ever since they got up, and their fond father, when he saw them so fine, forgave all their impertinence, and cast an eye of triumph on Mr. Worthy, who felt he had never loved his own humble daughter so well as at that moment.

In the afternoon, the whole party went to church. To do them justice, it was indeed their common practice once a day, when the weather was good, and the road was neither dusty nor dirty, when the minister did not begin too early, when the young ladies had not been disappointed of their bonnets on the Saturday night, and when they had no smart company in the house, who rather wished to stay at home. When this last was the case, which, to say the truth, happened pretty often, it was thought a piece of good manners to conform to the humour of the guests. Mr. Bragwell had this day forborne to ask any of his usual company; well knowing that their vain and worldly conversation would only serve to draw on him some new reprimand from his friend.

Mrs. Bragwell and her daughters picked up, as usual, a good deal of acquaintance at church. Many compliments passed, and much of the news of the week was retailed before the service began. They waited with impatience for the reading the lessons as a licensed season for whispering, and the subject begun during the lessons, was finished while they were singing the psalms. The young ladies made an appointment for the afternoon with a friend in the next pew, while their mamma took the opportunity of inquiring aloud, the character of a dairy maid, which she observed with a compliment to her own good management, would save time on a week-day.

Mr. Worthy, who found himself quite in new world, returned home with his friend alone. In the evening he ventured to ask Bragwell, if he did not, on a Sunday night, at least, make it a custom to read and pray with his family. Bragwell told him, he was sorry to say he had no family at home, else he should like to do it for the sake of example. But as his servants worked hard all the week, his wife was of opinion that they should then have a little holiday. Mr. Worthy pressed it home upon him, whether the utter neglect of his servants' principles was not likely to make a heavy article in his final account: and asked him if he did not believe that the too general liberty of meeting together, jaunting, and diverting themselves, on Sunday evenings, was not often found to produce the worst effects on the morals of servants and the good order of families? I put it to your conscience, said he, Mr. Bragwell, whether Sunday, which was meant as a blessing and a benefit, is not, as it is commonly kept, turned into the most mischievous part of the week, by the selfish kindness of masters, who, not daring to set their servants about any public work, allot them that day to follow their own devices, that they themselves may with more rigour refuse them a little indulgence, and a reasonable holiday, in the working part of the week, which a good servant has now and then a fair right to expect. Those masters who will give them half, or all the Lord's day, will not spare them a single hour of a working day. *Their* work *must* be done; God's work may be let alone.

Mr. Bragwell owned that Sunday had produced many mischiefs in his own family. That the young men and maids, having no eye upon them, frequently went to improper places with other servants, turned adrift like themselves. That in these parties the poor girls were too frequently led astray, and the men got to public houses and fives-playing. But it was none of his business to watch them. His family only did as others do; indeed it was his wife's concern; and she was so good a manager on other days, that she would not spare them an hour to visit a sick father or mother, it would be hard, she said, if they might not have Sunday afternoon to themselves, and she could not blame them for making the most of it. Indeed, she was so indulgent in this particular, that she often excused the men from going to church, that they might serve the beasts, and the maids, that they might get the milking done before the holiday part of the evening came on. She would not indeed hear of any competition between doing *her* work and taking their pleasure; but when the difference lay between their going to church and taking their pleasure, he *must* say that for his wife, she always inclined to the good-natured side of the question. She is strict enough in keeping them sober, because drunkenness is a costly sin; and to do her justice she does not care how little they sin at her expense.

Well, said Mr. Worthy, I always like to examine both sides fairly. and to see the different effects of opposite practices; now, which plan produces the greatest share of comfort to the master, and of profit to the servants in the long run? Your servants, 'tis likely, are very much attached to you; and very fond of living where they get their own way in so great a point.

O, as to that, replied Bragwell, you are quite out. My house is a scene of discord, mutiny, and discontent. And though there is not a better manager in England than my wife, yet she is always changing her servants; so that every quarter-day is a sort of jail delivery at my house; and when they go off, as they often do, at a moment's warning, to own the truth, I often give them money privately, that they may not carry my wife before the justice to get their wages.

I see, said Mr. Worthy, that all your worldly compliances do not procure you even worldly happiness. As to my own family, I take care to let them see that their pleasure is bound up with their duty, and that what they may call my strictness, has nothing in view but their safety and happiness. By this means I commonly gain their love, as well as secure their obedience. I know, that with all my care, I am liable to be disappointed, 'from the corruption that is in the world through sin.' But when

ever this happens, so far from encouraging me in remissness, it only serves to quicken my zeal. If by God's blessing, my servant turns out a good Christian, I have been a humble instrument in his hand of saving a soul committed to my charge.

Mrs. Bragwell came home, but brought only one of her daughters with her, the other, she said, had given them the slip, and was gone with a young friend, and would not return for a day or two. Mr. Bragwell was greatly displeased; as he knew that young friend had but a slight character, and kept bad acquaintances. Mrs. Bragwell came in, all hurry and bustle, saying, if her family did not go to bed with the lamb on Sundays, when they had nothing to do, how could they rise with the lark on Mondays, when so much was to be done.

Mr. Worthy had this night much matter for reflection. We need not, said he, go into the great world to look for dissipation and vanity. We can find both in a farm house. 'As for me and my house,' continued he, 'we will serve the Lord' every day, but especially on Sunday. 'It is the day which the Lord hath made; hath made for himself; we will rejoice in it,' and consider the religious use of it, not only as a duty, but as a privilege.

The next morning Mr. Bragwell and his friend set out early for the Golden Lion. What passed on this little journey, my readers shall hear soon.

PART IV.

The subject of prayer discussed in a morning's ride.

It was mentioned in the last part of this history, that the chief reason which had drawn Mr. Worthy to visit his friend just at the present time was, that Mr. Bragwell had a small estate to sell by auction. Mr. Worthy, though he did not think he should be a bidder, wished to be present, as he had business to settle with one or two persons who were expected at the Golden Lion, on that day, and he had put off his visit till he had seen the sale advertised in the county paper.

Mr. Bragwell and Mr. Worthy set out early on the Monday morning, on their way to the Golden Lion, a small inn in a neighbouring market town. As they had time before them, they had agreed to ride slowly that they might converse on some useful subject, but here, as usual, they had two opinions about the same thing. Mr. Bragwell's notion of an useful subject was, something by which money was to be got, and a good bargain struck. Mr. Worthy was no less a man of business than his friend. His schemes were wise, and his calculations just; his reputation for integrity and good sense made him the common judge and umpire in his neighbour's affairs, while no one paid a more exact attention to every transaction of his own. But the business of getting money was not with him the first, much less was it the whole concern of the day. He sought in the *first place*, 'the kingdom of God and his righteousness.' Every morning when he rose, he remembered that he had a Maker to worship as well as a family to maintain. Religion, however, never made him neglect business, though it sometimes led him to postpone it. He used to say, no man had any reason to expect God's blessing through the day, who did not ask it in the morning; nor was he likely to spend the day in the fear of God, who did not begin it with his worship. But he had not the less sense, spirit, and activity, when he was among men abroad, because he had first served God at home.

As these two farmers rode along, Mr. Worthy took occasion, from the fineness of the day, and the beauty of the country through which they passed, to turn the discourse to the goodness of God, and our infinite obligations to him. He knew that the transition from thanksgiving to prayer would be natural and easy; and he therefore, sliding by degrees into that important subject, observed, that secret prayer was a duty of universal obligation, which every man had it in his power to fulfil, and which he seriously believed was the ground-work of all religious practice, and of all devout affections.

Mr. Bragwell felt conscious that he was very negligent and irregular in the performance of this duty; indeed, he considered it as a mere ceremony, or at least, as a duty which might give way to the slightest temptation of drowsiness at night, or business in the morning. As he knew he did not live in the conscientious performance of this practice, he tried to ward off the subject, knowing what a home way his friend had of putting things. After some evasion, he at last said, he certainly thought private prayer a good custom, especially for people who have time; and that those who were sick, or old, or out of business, could not do better; but that for his part, he believed much of these sort of things was not expected from men in active life.

Worthy. I should think, Mr. Bragwell, that those who are most exposed to temptations stand most in need of prayer; now there are few, methinks, who are more exposed to temptation than men in business; for those must be in most danger, at least from the world, who have most to do with it. And if this be true, ought we not to prepare ourselves in the closet for the trials of the market, the field, and the shop? It is but putting on our armour before we go out to battle.

Bragwell. For my part, I think example is the whole of religion, and if the master of a family is orderly, and regular, and goes to church, he does every thing which can be required of him, and no one has a right to call him to an account for any thing more.

Worthy. Give me leave to say, Mr. Bragwell, that highly as I rate a good example, still I must set a good principle above it. I know I must keep good order indeed, for the sake of others; but I must keep a good conscience for my own sake. To God I owe secret piety, I must therefore pray to him in private.—To my family I owe a Christian example, and for that, among other reasons, I must not fail to go to church.

Bragwell. You are talking, Mr. Worthy, as if I were an enemy to religion. Sir, I am no

heathen. Sir, I am a Christian; I belong to the church; I go to church; I always drink prosperity to the church. You yourself, as strict as you are, in never missing it twice a day, are not a warmer friend to the church than I am.

Worthy. That is to say, you know its inestimable value as a political institution; but you do not seem to know that a man may be very irreligious under the best religious institutions; and that even the most excellent only furnishes the *means* of being religious, and is no more religion itself than brick and mortar are prayers and thanksgivings. I shall never think, however high their profession, and even however regular their attendance, that those men truly respect the church, who bring home little of that religion which is taught in it into their own families or their own hearts; or, who make the whole of Christianity to consist in a mere formal attendance there. Excuse me Mr. Bragwell.

Bragwell. Mr. Worthy, I am persuaded that religion is quite a proper thing for the poor; and I don't think that the multitude can ever be kept in order without it; and I am a sort of a politician you know. We *must* have bits, and bridles, and restraints for the vulgar.

Worthy. Your opinion is very just, as far as it goes; but it does not go far enough, since, it does not go to the root of the evil; for while you value yourself on the soundness of this principle as a politician, I wish you also to see the reason of it as a Christian; depend upon it, if religion be good for the community at large, it is equally good for every family; and what is right for a family is equally right for each individual in it. You have therefore yourself brought the most unanswerable argument why you ought to be religious yourself, by asking how we shall keep others in order without religion. For, believe me, Mr. Bragwell, there is no particular clause to except *you* in the Gospel. There are no exceptions there in favour of any one class of men. The same restraints which are necessary for the people at large, are equally necessary for men of every order, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, learned and ignorant. If Jesus Christ died for no one particular rank, class, or community, then there is no one rank, class, or community, exempt from the obedience to his laws enjoined by the Gospel. May I ask you, Mr. Bragwell, what is your reason for going to church?

Bragwell. Sir, I am shocked at your question. How can I avoid doing a thing so customary and so creditable? Not go to church, indeed! What do you take me for, Mr. Worthy? I am afraid you suspect me to be a papist, or a heathen, or of some religion or other that is not Christian.

Worthy. If a foreigner were to hear how violently one set of Christians in this country often speak against another, how earnest would he suppose us all to be in religious matters: and how astonished to discover that many a man has perhaps little other proof to give of the sincerity of his own religion, except the violence with which he hates the religion of another party. It is not *irreligion* which such men hate; but the religion of the man, or the party, whom we are set against: now hatred is certainly no part of the religion of the Gospel. Well, you have told me why you go to church; now pray tell me, why do you confess there on your bended knees, every Sunday, that 'you have erred and strayed from God's ways?'—'that there is no health in you?—'that you have done what you ought not to do?—and that you are a miserable sinner?'

Bragwell. Because it is in the Common Prayer Book, to be sure; a book which I have heard you yourself say was written by wise and good men; the glory of Christianity, the pillars of the protestant church.

Worthy. But have you no other reason?

Bragwell. No, I can't say I have.

Worthy. When you repeat that excellent form of confession, do you really feel that you *are* a miserable sinner?

Bragwell. No, I can't say I do. But that is no objection to my repeating it: because it may suit the cause of many who are so. I suppose the good doctors who drew it up, intended that part for wicked people only, such as drunkards, and thieves, and murderers; for I imagine they could not well contrive to make the same prayer quite suit an honest man and a rogue; and so I suppose they thought it better to make a good man repeat a prayer which suited a rogue, than to make a rogue repeat a prayer which suited a good man; and you know it is so customary for every body to repeat the general confession, that it can't hurt the credit of the most respectable persons, though every respectable person must know they have no particular concern in it; as they are not sinners.

Worthy. Depend upon it, Mr. Bragwell, those good doctors you speak of, were not quite of your opinion; they really thought that what you call honest men were grievous sinners in a certain sense, and that the best of us stand in need of making that humble confession. Mr. Bragwell do you believe in the fall of Adam?

Bragwell. To be sure I do, and a sad thing for Adam it was; why, it is in the Bible, is it not? It is one of the prettiest chapters in Genesis. Don't *you* believe Mr. Worthy?

Worthy. Yes, truly I do. But I don't believe it *merely* because I read it in Genesis; though I know, indeed, that I am bound to believe every part of the word of God. But I have still an additional reason for believing in the fall of the first man.

Bragwell. Have you, indeed? Now, I can't guess what that can be.

Worthy. Why, my own observation of what is within myself teaches me to believe it. It is not only the third chapter of Genesis which convinces me of the truth of the fall, but also the sinful inclinations which I find in my own heart corresponding with it. This is one of those leading truths of Christianity of which I can never doubt a moment: first because it is abundantly expressed or implied in Scripture; and next, because the consciousness of the evil nature, I carry about with me confirms the doctrine beyond all doubt. Besides, is it not said in Scripture, that by one man sin entered into the world, and that 'all we, like lost sheep, have gone astray;'—'that by one man's disobedience

many were made sinners;'—and so again in twenty more places that I could tell you of.

Bragwell. Well; I never thought of this. But is not this a very melancholy sort of doctrine, Mr. Worthy?

Worthy. It is melancholy, indeed, if we stop here. But while we are deploring this sad truth, let us take comfort from another, that 'as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.'

Bragwell. Yes; I remember I thought those very fine words, when I heard them said over my poor father's grave. But as it was in the burial of the dead, I did not think of taking it to myself; for I was then young and hearty, and in little danger of dying, and I have been so busy ever since, that I have hardly had time to think of it.

Worthy. And yet the service pronounced at the burial of all who die, is a solemn admonition to all who live. It is there said, as indeed the Scripture says also, 'I am the resurrection and the life; whosoever *believeth in me* shall never die, but I will raise him up at the last day.' Now do you think you *believe in Christ*, Mr. Bragwell?

Bragwell. To be sure I do; why you are always fancying me an atheist.

Worthy. In order to believe in Christ, we must believe first in our own guilt and our own unworthiness; and when we do this we shall see the use of a Saviour, and not till then.

Bragwell. Why, all this is a new way of talking. I can't say I ever meddled with such subjects before in my life. But now, what do you advise a man to do upon your plan of religion?

Worthy. Why all this leads me back to the ground from which we set out, I mean the duty of prayer; for if we believe that we have an evil nature within us, and that we stand in need of God's grace to help us, and a Saviour to redeem us, we shall be led of course to pray for what we so much need; and without this conviction we shall not be led to pray.

Bragwell. Well, but don't you think, Mr. Worthy, that you good folks who make so much of prayer, have lower notions than we have of the wisdom of the Almighty? You think he wants to be informed of the thing you tell him; whereas, I take it for granted that he knows them already, and that, being so good as he is, he will give me every thing he sees fit to give me, without my asking it.

Worthy. God, indeed, who knows all things, knows what we want before we ask him; but still has he not said that, 'with prayer and supplication we must make known our requests unto him?' Prayer is the way in which God hath said that his favour must be sought. It is the channel through which he has declared it his sovereign will and pleasure that his blessings should be conveyed to us. What ascends up in prayer descends to us again in blessings. It is like the rain which just now fell, and which had been drawn up from the ground in vapours to the clouds before it descended from them to the earth in that refreshing shower. Besides prayer has a good effect on our minds; it tends to excite a right disposition towards God in us, and to keep up a constant sense of our dependence. But above all, it is the way to get the good things we want. 'Ask,' says the Scripture, 'and ye shall receive.'

Bragwell. Now, that is the very thing which I was going to deny: for the truth is, men do not always get what they ask; I believe if I could get a good crop for asking it, I would pray oftener than I do.

Worthy. Sometimes, Mr. Bragwell, men 'ask and receive not, because they ask amiss;'—'they ask that they may consume it on their lusts.'—They ask worldly blessings, perhaps, when they should ask spiritual ones. Now, the latter, which are the good things I spoke of, are always granted to those who pray to God for them, though the former are not. I have observed in the case of some worldly things I have sought for, that the grant of my prayer would have caused the misery of my life; so that God equally consults our good in what he withholds, and in what he bestows.

Bragwell. And yet you continue to pray on I suppose?

Worthy. Certainly; but then I try to mend as to the object of my prayers. I pray for God's blessing and favour, which is better than riches.

Bragwell. You seem very earnest on this subject.

Worthy. To cut the matter short; I ask then, whether prayer is not positively commanded in the Gospel. When this is the case, we can never dispute about the necessity or the duty of a thing, as we may when there is no such command. Here, however, let me just add also, that a man's prayers may be turned into no small use in the way of discovering to him whatever is amiss in his life.

Bragwell. How so, Mr. Worthy?

Worthy. Why, suppose now, you were to try yourself by turning into the shape of a prayer every practice in which you allow yourself. For instance, let the prayer in the morning be a sort of preparation for the deeds of the day, and the prayer at night a sort of retrospection of those deeds. You, Mr. Bragwell, I suspect, are a little inclined to covetousness; excuse me, sir. Now, suppose after you have been during a whole day a little too eager to get rich; suppose, I say, you were to try how it would sound to beg of God at night on your knees, to give you still more money, though you have already so much that you know not what to do with it. Suppose you were to pray in the morning, 'O Lord, give me more riches, though those I have are a snare and a temptation to me;' and ask him in the same solemn manner to bless all the grasping means you intend to make use of in the day, to add to your substance?

Bragwell, Mr. Worthy, I have no patience with you for thinking I could be so wicked.

Worthy. Yet to make such a covetous prayer as this is hardly more wicked, or more absurd, than to lead the life of the covetous, by sinning up to the spirit of that very prayer which you would not have the courage to put into words. Still further observe how it would sound to confess your sins, und pray against them all, except one favourite sin. 'Lord, do thou enable me to forsake all my sins, except the love of

money;'—'in this one thing pardon thy servant.'—Or, 'Do thou enable me to forgive all who have injured me, except old Giles.' This you will object against, as a wicked prayer; but if wicked in prayer, it must be wicked in practice. It is even more shocking to make it the language of the heart, or of the life, than of the lips. And yet, because you have been used to see people act thus, and have not been used to hear them pray thus, you are shocked at the one, and not shocked at the other.

Bragwell. Shocked, indeed! Why, at this rate, you would teach one to hate one's self.

Worthy. Hear me out, Mr. Bragwell; you turned your good nephew, Tom Broad, out of doors, you know; you owned to me it was an act of injustice. Now, suppose on the morning of your doing so you had begged of God, in a solemn act of prayer, to prosper the deed of cruelty and oppression, which you intended to commit that day. I see you are shocked at the thought of such a prayer. Well, then, would not hearty prayer have kept you from committing that wicked action? In short, what a life must that be, no act of which you dare beg God to prosper and bless? If once you can bring yourself to believe that it is your bounden duty to pray for God's blessing on your day's work, you will certainly grow careful about passing such a day as you may safely ask his blessing upon. The remark may be carried to sports, diversions, company. A man, who once takes up the serious use of prayer, will soon find himself obliged to abstain from such diversions, occupations, and societies, as he cannot reasonably desire that God will bless to him; and thus he will see himself compelled to leave off either the practice or the prayer. Now, Mr. Bragwell, I need not ask you which of the two he that is a real Christian will give up, sinning or praying.

Mr. Bragwell began to feel that he had not the best of the argument, and was afraid he was making no great figure in the eyes of his friend. Luckily, however, he was relieved from the difficulty into which the necessity of making some answer must have brought him, by finding they were come to the end of their little journey: and he never beheld the Bunch of Grapes, which decorated the sign of the Golden Lion, with more real satisfaction.

I refer my readers for the transactions at the Golden Lion, and for the sad adventures which afterwards befel Mr. Bragwell's family, to the fifth part of the History of the Two Wealthy Farmers.

PART V.

THE GOLDEN LION.

Mr. Bragwell and Mr. Worthy alighted at the Golden Lion. It was market-day: the inn, the yard, the town was all alive.—Bragwell was quite in his element. Money, company, and good cheer always set his spirits afloat. He felt himself the principal man in the scene. He had three great objects in view; the sale of his land; the letting Mr. Worthy see how much he was looked up to by so many substantial people, and the showing these people what a wise man his most intimate friend, Mr. Worthy was. It was his way to try to borrow a little credit from every person, and every thing he was connected with, and by that credit to advance his interest and increase his wealth.

The farmers met in a large room; and while they were transacting their various concerns, those whose pursuits were the same, naturally herded together. The tanners were drawn to one corner, by the common interest which they took in bark and hides. A useful debate was carrying on at another little table, whether the practice of *sowing* wheat or of *planting* it were most profitable. Another set were disputing whether horses or oxen were best for ploughs. Those who were concerned in canals, sought the company of other canallers; while some, who were interested in the new bill for inclosures, wisely looked out for such as knew most about waste lands.

Mr. Worthy was pleased with all these subjects, and picked up something useful on each. It was a saying of his, that most men understood some one thing, and that he who was wise would try to learn from every man something on the subject he best knew; but Mr. Worthy made a further use of the whole. What a pity is it, said he, that Christians are not so desirous to turn their time to good account as men of business are! When shall we see religious persons as anxious to derive profit from the experience of others as these farmers? When shall we see them as eager to turn their time to good account? While I approve these men for not being *slothful in business*, let me improve the hint, by being also *fervent in spirit*.

Showing how much wiser the children of this generation are than the children of Light.

When the hurry was a little over, Mr. Bragwell took a turn on the bowling-green. Mr. Worthy followed him, to ask why the sale of the estate was not brought forward. Let the auctioneer proceed to business, said he; the company will be glad to get home by daylight. I speak mostly with a view to others; for I do not think of being a purchaser myself. I know it, said Bragwell, or I would not be such a fool as to let the cat out of the bag. But is it really possible (proceeded he, with a smile of contempt) that you should think I will sell my estate before dinner? Mr. Worthy, you are a clever man at books, and such things; and perhaps can make out an account on paper in a handsomer manner than I can. But I never found much was to be got by fine writing. As to figures, I can carry enough of them in my head to add, divide, and multiply more money than your learning will ever give you the fingering of. You may beat me at a book, but you are a very child at a bargain. Sell my land before dinner indeed!

Mr. Worthy was puzzled to guess how a man was to show more wisdom by selling a piece of ground at one hour than another, and desired an explanation. Bragwell felt rather more contempt for his understanding than he had ever done before. Look'ee, Mr. Worthy, said he, I do not think that knowledge is of any use to a

man, unless he has sense enough to turn it to account. Men are my books, Mr. Worthy; and it is by reading, spelling, and putting them together to good purpose, that I have got up in the world. I shall give you a proof of this today. Those farmers are most of them come to the Lion with a view of purchasing this bit of land of mine, if they should like the bargain. Now, as you know a thing can't be any great bargain both to the buyer and the seller too, to them and to me, it becomes me as a man of sense, who has the good of his family at heart, to secure the bargain to myself. I would not cheat any man, sir, but I think it fair enough to turn his weakness to my own advantage; there is no law against that, you know; and this is the use of one man's having more sense than another. So, whenever I have a piece of land to sell, I always give a handsome dinner, with plenty of punch and strong beer. We fill up the morning with other business; and I carefully keep back my talk about the purchase till we have dined. At dinner we have, of course, a slice of politics. This puts most of us into a passion, and you know anger is thirsty. Besides, 'Church and King' naturally brings on a good many other toasts. Now, as I am master of the feast, you know it would be shabby in me to save my liquor; so I push about the glass one way, and the tankard the other, till all my company are as merry as kings. Every man is delighted to see what a fine hearty fellow he has to deal with, and Mr. Bragwell receives a thousand compliments. By this time they have gained as much in good humour as they have lost in sober judgment, and this is the proper moment for setting the auctioneer to work, and this I commonly do to such good purpose, that I go home with my purse a score or two pounds heavier than if they had not been warmed by their dinner. In the morning men are cool and suspicious, and have all their wits about them; but a cheerful glass cures all distrust. And, what is lucky, I add to my credit as well as my pocket, and get more praise for my dinner than blame for my bargain.

Mr. Worthy was struck with the absurd vanity which could tempt a man to own himself guilty of an unfair action for the sake of showing his wisdom. He was beginning to express his disapprobation, when they were told dinner was on table. They went in, and were soon seated. All was mirth and good cheer. Every body agreed that no one gave such hearty dinners as Mr. Bragwell. Nothing was pitiful where he was master of the feast. Bragwell, who looked with pleasure on the excellent dinner before him, and enjoyed the good account to which he should turn it, heard their praises with delight, and cast an eye on Worthy, as much as to say who is the wise man now. Having a mind, for his own credit, to make his friend talk, he turned to him, saying, Mr. Worthy, I believe no people in the world enjoy life more than men of our class. We have money and power, we live on the fat of the land, and have as good a right to gentility as the best.

As to gentility, Mr. Bragwell, replied Worthy, I am not sure that this is among the wisest of our pretensions. But I will say, that our's is a creditable and respectable business. In ancient times, farming was the employment of princes and patriarchs; and, now-a-days, an honest, humane, sensible, English yeoman, I will be bold to say, is not only a very useful, but an honourable character. But then, he must not merely think of *enjoying life* as you call it, but he must think of *living* up to the great ends for which he was sent into the world. A wealthy farmer not only has it in his power to live well, but to do much good. He is not only the father of his own family, but his workmen, his dependants, and the poor at large, especially in these hard times. He has it in his power to raise into credit all the parish offices which have fallen into disrepute by getting into bad hands; and he can convert, what have been falsely thought mean offices, into very important ones, by his just and Christian like manner of filling them. An upright juryman, a conscientious constable, a humane overseer, an independent elector, an active superintendent of a work-house, a just arbitrator in public disputes, a kind counsellor in private troubles; such an one, I say, fills up a station in society no less necessary, and, as far as it reaches, scarcely less important than that of a magistrate, a sheriff of a county, or even a member of parliament. That can never be a slight or degrading office, on which the happiness of a whole parish may depend.

Bragwell, who thought the good sense of his friend reflected credit on himself, encouraged Worthy to go on, but he did it in his own vain way. Ay, very true, Mr. Worthy, said he, you are right; a leading man in our class ought to be looked up to as an example, as you say; in order to which, he should do things handsomely and liberally, and not grudge himself, or his friends, any thing; casting an eye of complacency on the good dinner he had provided. True, replied Mr. Worthy, he should be an example of simplicity, sobriety, and plainness of manners. But he will do well, added he, not to affect a frothy gentility, which will sit but clumsily upon him. If he has money, let him spend prudently, lay up moderately for his children, and give liberally to the poor. But let him rather seek to dignify his own station by his virtues, than to get above it by his vanity. If he acts thus, then, as long as his country lasts, a farmer of England will be looked upon as one of its most valuable members; nay more, by this conduct, he may contribute to make England last the longer. The riches of the farmer, corn and cattle, are the true riches of a nation; but let him remember, that though corn and cattle *enrich* a country, nothing but justice, integrity, and religion, can *preserve* it.

Here one of the company, who was known to be a man of loose principles, and who seldom went to public worship, said he had no objection to religion, and was always ready to testify his regard to it by drinking church and king. On this Mr. Worthy remarked, that he was afraid that too many contented themselves with making this toast include the whole of their religion, if not of their loyalty. It is with real sorrow, continued he, that I am compelled to observe, that though there are numberless honourable instances to the contrary, yet I have

seen more contempt and neglect of Christianity in men of our calling, than in almost any other. They too frequently hate the rector on account of his tithes, to which he has as good a right as they have to their farms, and the curate on account of his poverty; but the truth is, religion itself is often the concealed object of their dislike. I know too many, who, while they affect a violent outward zeal for the church, merely because they conceive its security to be somehow connected with their own political advantages, yet prove the hollowness of their attachment, by showing little regard to its ministers, and less to its ordinances.

Young Wilson, the worthy grazier, whom Miss Bragwell turned off because he did not understand French dances, thanked Mr. Worthy for what he had said, and hoped he should be the better for it as long as he lived, and desired his leave to be better acquainted. Most of the others declared they had never heard a finer speech, and then, as is usual, proceeded to show the good effect it had on them, by loose conversation, hard drinking, and whatever could counteract all that Worthy had been saying.

Mr. Worthy was much concerned to hear Mr. Bragwell, after dinner, whisper to the waiter, to put less and less water into every fresh bowl of punch. This was his old way; if the time they had to sit was long, then the punch was to be weaker, as he saw no good in wasting money to make it stronger than the time required. But if time pressed, then the strength was to be increased in due proportion, as a small quantity must then intoxicate them as much in a short time as would be required of a greater quantity had the time been longer. This was one of Mr. Bragwell's nice calculations; and this was the sort of skill on which he so much valued himself.

At length the guests were properly primed for business; just in that convenient stage of intoxication which makes men warm and rash, yet keeps short of that absolute drunkenness, which disqualifies for business, the auctioneer set to work. All were bidders, and, if possible, all would have been purchasers; so happily had the feast and the punch operated. They bid on with a still increasing spirit, till they got so much above the value of the land, that Bragwell with a wink and a whisper, said: Who would sell his land fasting? Eh! Worthy? At length the estate was knocked down, at a price very far above its worth.

As soon as it was sold, Bragwell again said softly to Worthy, Five from fifty and there remain forty-five. The dinner and drink won't cost me five pounds, and I have got fifty more than the land was worth. Spend a shilling to gain a pound! This is what I call practical arithmetic, Mr. Worthy.

Mr. Worthy was glad to get out of this scene; and seeing that his friend was quite sober, he resolved as they rode home, to deal plainly with him. Bragwell had found out, among his calculations, that there were some sins which could only be committed, by a prudent man, one at a time. For instance, he knew that a man could not well get rich and get drunk at the same moment; so that he used to practice one first, and the other after; but he had found out that some vices made very good company together; thus, while he had watched himself in drinking, lest he should become as unfit to sell as his guests were to buy, he had indulged, without measure, in the good dinner he had provided. Mr. Worthy, I say, seeing him able to bear reason, rebuked him for this day's proceedings with some severity. Bragwell bore his reproofs with that sort of patience which arises from an opinion of one's own wisdom, accompanied by a recent flush of prosperity. He behaved with that gay good humour, which grows out of united vanity and good fortune. You are too squeamish, Mr. Worthy, said he, I have done nothing discreditable. These men came with their eyes open. There is no compulsion used. They are free to bid or to let it alone. I make them welcome, and I shall not be thought a bit the worse of by them to-morrow, when they are sober. Others do it besides me, and I shall never be ashamed of any thing as long as I have custom on my side.

Worthy. I am sorry, Mr. Bragwell, to hear you support such practices by such arguments. There is not, perhaps, a more dangerous snare to the souls of men than is to be found in that word CUSTOM. It is a word invented to reconcile corruption with credit, and sin with safety. But no custom, no fashion, no combination of men, to set up a false standard can ever make a wrong action right. That a thing is often done, is so far from a proof of its being right, that it is the very reason which will set a thinking man to inquire if it be not really wrong, lest he should be following, 'a multitude to do evil.' Right is right, though only one man in a thousand pursues it; and wrong will be forever wrong, though it be the allowed practice of the other nine hundred and ninety-nine. If this shameful custom be really common, which I can hardly believe, that is a fresh reason why a conscientious man should set his face against it. And I must go so far as to say (you will excuse me Mr. Bragwell) that I see no great difference, in the eye of conscience, whatever there may be in the eye of the law, between your making a man first lose his reason, and then getting fifty guineas out of his pocket, *because* he has lost it, and your picking the fifty guineas out of his pocket, if you had met him dead drunk in his way home to-night. Nay, he who meets a man already drunk and robs him, commits but one sin; while he who makes him drunk first that he may rob him afterwards, commits two.

Bragwell gravely replied: Mr. Worthy, while I have the practice of people of credit to support me, and the law of the land to protect me, I see no reason to be ashamed of any thing I do. Mr. Bragwell, answered Worthy, a truly honest man is not always looking sharp about him, to see how far custom and the law will bear him out; if he be honest on principle, he will consult the law of his conscience, and if he be a Christian, he will consult the written law of God. We never deceive ourselves more than when we overreach others. You would not allow that you had robbed your neighbour for the world, yet you are not ashamed to own you have outwitted him. I have read this great truth in the

works of a heathen, Mr. Bragwell, that the chief misery of man arises from his not knowing how to make right calculations.

Bragwell. Sir, the remark does not belong to me. I have not made an error of a farthing. Look at the account, sir—right to the smallest fraction.

Worthy. Sir, I am talking of final accounts; spiritual calculations; arithmetic in the long run. Now, in this, your real Christian is the only true calculator: he has found out that we shall be richer in the end, by denying, than by indulging ourselves. He knows that when the balance comes to be struck, when profit and loss shall be summed up, and the final account adjusted, that whatever ease, prosperity, and delight we had in this world, yet if we have lost our souls in the end, we cannot reckon that we have made a good bargain. We cannot pretend that a few items of present pleasure make any great figure, set over against the sum total of eternal misery. So you see it is only for want of a good head at calculation that men prefer time to eternity, pleasure to holiness, earth to heaven. You see if we get our neighbour's money at the price of our own integrity; hurt his good name, but destroy our own souls; raise our outward character, but wound our inward conscience; when we come to the last reckoning, we shall find that we were only knaves in the second instance, but fools in the first. In short, we shall find that whatever other wisdom we possessed, we were utterly ignorant of the skill of true calculation.

Notwithstanding this rebuff, Mr. Bragwell got home in high spirits, for no arguments could hinder him from feeling that he had the fifty guineas in his purse.

There is to a worldly man something so irresistible in the actual possession of present, and visible, and palpable pleasure, that he considers it as a proof of his wisdom to set them in decided opposition to the invisible realities of eternity.

As soon as Bragwell came in, he gayly threw the money he had received on the table, and desired his wife to lock it up. Instead of receiving it with her usual satisfaction, she burst into a violent fit of passion, and threw it back to him. You may keep your cash yourself, said she. It is all over—we want no more money. You are a ruined man! A wicked creature, scraping and working as we have done for her!—Bragwell trembled, but durst not ask what he dreaded to hear. His wife spared him the trouble, by crying out as soon as her rage permitted: The girl is ruined; Polly is gone off! Poor Bragwell's heart sunk within him; he grew sick and giddy, and as his wife's rage swallowed up her grief, so, in his grief, he almost forgot his anger. The purse fell from his hand, and he cast a look of anguish upon it, finding, for the first time that money could not relieve his misery.

Mr. Worthy, who, though much concerned, was less discomposed, now called to mind, that the young lady had not returned with her mother and sister the night before: he begged Mrs. Bragwell to explain this sad story. She, instead of soothing her husband, fell to reproaching him. It is all your fault, said she; you were a fool for your pains.—If I had had my way the girls would never have kept company with any but men of substance, and then they could not have been ruined. Mrs. Bragwell, said Worthy, if she has chosen a bad man, it would be still a misfortune, even though he had been rich. O, that would alter the case, said she, a *fat sorrow is better than a lean one.* But to marry a beggar! there is no sin like that. Here Miss Betsey, who stood sullenly by, put in a word, and said, her sister, however, had not disgraced herself by having married a farmer or a tradesman; she had, at least, made choice of a gentleman. What marriage! what gentleman! cried the afflicted father. Tell me the worst! He was now informed that his darling daughter was gone off with a strolling player, who had been acting in the neighbouring villages lately.—Miss Betsey again put in, saying, he was no stroller, but a gentleman in disguise, who only acted for his own diversion. Does he so, said the now furious Bragwell, then he shall be transported for mine.

At this moment a letter was brought him from his new son-in-law, who desired his leave to wait upon him, and implore his forgiveness. He owned he had been shopman to a haberdasher; but thinking his person and talents ought not to be thrown away upon trade, and being also a little behind hand, he had taken to the stage with a view of making his fortune: that he had married Miss Bragwell entirely for love, and was sorry to mention so paltry a thing as money, which he despised, but that his wants were pressing: his landlord, to whom he was in debt, having been so vulgar as to threaten to send him to prison. He ended with saying: 'I have been obliged to shock your daughter's delicacy, by confessing my unlucky real name. I believe I owe part of my success with her, to my having assumed that of Augustus Frederick Theodosius. She is inconsolable at this confession, which, as you are now my father, I must also make to you, and subscribe myself, with many blushes, by the vulgar name of your dutiful son,

TIMOTHY INCLE.'

'O!' cried the afflicted father, as he tore the letter in a rage, 'Miss Bragwell married to a strolling actor! How shall I bear it?'—'Why, I would not bear it at all,' cried the enraged mother; 'I would never see her; I would never forgive her; I would let her starve at the corner of the barn, while that rascal, with all those pagan, popish names, was ranting away at the other.'—'Nay,' said Miss Betsey, 'if he is only a shopman, and if his name be really Timothy Incle, I would never forgive her neither. But who would have thought it by his looks, and by his *monstrous genteel* behaviour? no, he never can have so vulgar a name.'

'Come, come,' said Mr. Worthy, 'were he really an honest haberdasher, I should think there was no other harm done, except the disobedience of the thing. Mr. Bragwell, this is no time to blame you, or hardly to reason with you. I feel for you sincerely. I ought not, perhaps, just at present, to reproach you for the mistaken manner in which you have bred up

your daughters, as your error has brought its punishment along with it. You now see, because you now feel, the evil of a false education. It has ruined your daughter; your whole plan unavoidably led to some such end. The large sums you spent to qualify them, as you thought, for a high station, only served to make them despise their own, and could do them nothing but harm, while your habits of life properly confined them to company of a lower class. While they were better drest than the daughters of the first gentry, they were worse taught as to real knowledge, than the daughters of your ploughmen. Their vanity has been raised by excessive finery, and kept alive by excessive flattery. Every evil temper has been fostered by indulgence. Their pride has never been controlled; their self-will has never been subdued; their idleness has laid them open to every temptation, and their abundance has enabled them to gratify every desire; their time, that precious talent, has been entirely wasted. Every thing they have been taught to do is of no use, while they are utterly unacquainted with all which they ought to have known. I deplore Miss Polly's false step. That she should have married a runaway shopman, turned stroller, I truly lament. But for what better husband was she qualified? For the wife of a farmer she was too idle: for the wife of a tradesman she was too expensive: for the wife of a gentleman she was too ignorant. You, yourself, was most to blame. You expected her to act wisely, though you never taught her that *fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom.* I owe it to you, as a friend, and to myself as a Christian, to declare, that your practices in the common transactions of life, as well as your present misfortune, are almost the natural consequences of those false principles which I protested against when you were at my house.*

Mrs. Bragwell attempted several times to interrupt Mr. Worthy, but her husband would not permit it. He felt the force of all his friend said, and encouraged him to proceed. Mr. Worthy thus went on: 'It grieves me to say how much your own indiscretion has contributed even to bring on your present misfortune. You gave your countenance to this very company of strollers, though you knew they were acting in defiance to the laws of the land, to say no worse. They go from town to town, and from barn to barn, stripping the poor of their money, the young of their innocence, and all of their time. Do you remember with how much pride you told me that you had bespoke *The Bold Stroke for a Wife*, for the benefit of this very Mr. Frederic Theodosius? To this pernicious ribaldry you not only carried your own family, but wasted I know not how much money in treating your workmen's wives and children, in these hard times too when they have scarcely bread to eat, or a shoe on their feet: and all this only that you might have the absurd pleasure of seeing those flattering words, *By desire of Mr. Bragwell*, stuck up in print at the public house, on the blacksmith's shed, at the turnpike-gate, and on the barn-door.'

* See Part II.

Mr. Bragwell acknowledged that his friend's rebuke was too just, and he looked so very contrite as to raise the pity of Mr. Worthy, who, in a mild voice, thus went on: 'What I have said is not so much to reproach you with the ruin of one daughter, as from a desire to save the other. Let Miss Betsey go home with me. I do not undertake to be her jailer, but I will be her friend. She will find in my daughters kind companions, and in my wife a prudent guide. I know she will dislike us at first, but I do not despair in time of convincing her that a sober, humble, useful, pious life, is as necessary to make us happy on earth, as it is to fit us for heaven.'

Poor Miss Betsey, though she declared it would be *frightful dull* and *monstrous vulgar* and *dismal melancholy*, yet was she so terrified at the discontent and grumbling which she would have to endure at home, that she sullenly consented. She had none of that filial tenderness which led her to wish to *stay and sooth* and comfort her afflicted father. All she thought about was to get out of the way of her mother's ill humour, and to carry so much finery with her as to fill the Miss Worthys with envy and respect. Poor girl! she did not know that envy was a feeling they never indulged; and that fine clothes were the last thing to draw their respect.

Mr. Worthy took her home next day. When they reached his house they found there young Wilson, Miss Betsey's old admirer. She was much pleased at this, and resolved to treat him well. But her good or ill treatment now signified but little. This young grazier reverenced Mr. Worthy's character, and ever since he had met him at the Lion, had been thinking what a happiness it would be to marry a young woman bred up by such a father. He had heard much of the modesty and discretion of both the daughters, but his inclination now determined him in favour of the elder.

Mr. Worthy, who knew him to be a young man of good sense and sound principles, allowed him to become a visitor at his house, but deferred his consent to the marriage till he knew him more thoroughly. Mr. Wilson, from what he saw of the domestic piety of this family, improved daily, both in the knowledge and practice of religion; and Mr. Worthy soon formed him into a most valuable character. During this time Miss Bragwell's hopes had revived; but though she appeared in a new dress almost every day, she had the mortification of being beheld with great indifference by one whom she had always secretly liked. Mr. Wilson married before her face a girl who was greatly her inferior in fortune, person, and appearance; but who was humble, frugal, meek and pious. Miss Bragwell now strongly felt the truth of what Mr. Wilson had once told her, that a woman may make an excellent partner for a dance who would make a very bad companion for life.

Hitherto Mr. Bragwell and his daughters had only learnt to regret their folly and vanity, as it had produced them mortification in this life; whether they were ever brought to a more serious sense of their errors may be seen in a future part of this history.

PART VI.

GOOD RESOLUTIONS.

MR. BRAGWELL was so much afflicted at the disgraceful marriage of his daughter, who ran off with Timothy Incle, the strolling player, that he never fully recovered his spirits. His cheerfulness, which had arisen from an high opinion of himself, had been confirmed by a constant flow of uninterrupted success; and that is a sort of cheerfulness which is very liable to be impaired, because it lies at the mercy of every accident and cross event in life. But though his pride was now disappointed, his misfortunes had not taught him any humility, because he had not discovered that they were caused by his own fault; nor had he acquired any patience or submission because he had not learnt that all afflictions come from the hand of God, to awaken us to a deep sense of our sins, and to draw off our hearts from the perishing vanities of this life. Besides, Mr. Bragwell was one of those people, who, even if they would be thought to bear with tolerable submission such trials as appear to be sent more immediately from Providence, yet think they have a sort of right to rebel at every misfortune which befals them through the fault of a fellow-creature; as if our fellow-creatures were not the agents and instruments by which Providence often sees fit to try or to punish us.

In answer to his heavy complaints, Mr. Worthy wrote him a letter, in which he expatiated on the injustice of our impatience, and on the folly of our vindicating ourselves from guilt in the distinctions we make between those trials which seem to come more immediately from God, and those which proceed directly from the faults of our fellow-creatures. 'Sickness, losses, and death, we think,' continued he, 'we dare not openly rebel against; while we fancy we are quite justified in giving a loose to our violence when we suffer by the hand of the oppressor, the unkindness of the friend, or the disobedience of the child. But this is one of the delusions of our blinded hearts. Ingratitude, unkindness, calumny, are permitted to assail us by the same power who cuts off 'the desire of our eyes at a stroke.' The friend who betrays us, and the daughter who deceives us, are instruments for our chastisement, sent by the same purifying hand who orders a fit of sickness to weaken our bodies, or a storm to destroy our crop, or a fire to burn down our house. And we must look for the same remedy in the one case as in the other; I mean prayer and a deep submission to the will of God. We must leave off looking at second causes, and look more at Him who sets them in action. We must try to find out the meaning of the Providence; and hardly dare pray to be delivered from it till it has accomplished in us the end for which it was sent.'

His imprudent daughter, Bragwell would not be brought to see or forgive, nor was the degrading name of Mrs. Incle ever allowed to be pronounced in his hearing. He had loved her with an excessive and undue affection; and while she gratified his vanity by her beauty and finery, he deemed her faults of little consequence; but when she disappointed his ambition by a disgraceful marriage, all his natural affection only served to increase his resentment. Yet, though he regretted her crime less than his own mortification, he never ceased in secret to lament her loss. She soon found out she was undone; and wrote in a strain of bitter repentance to ask him for forgiveness. She owned that her husband, whom she had supposed to be a man of fashion in disguise, was a low person in distressed circumstances. She implored that her father, though he refused to give her husband that fortune for which alone it was now too plain he had married her, would at least allow her some subsistence; for that Mr. Incle was much in debt, and she feared in danger of a jail.

The father's heart was half melted at this account, and his affection was for a time awakened. But Mrs. Bragwell opposed his sending her any assistance. She always made it a point of duty never to forgive; for she said it only encouraged those who had done wrong once to do worse next time. For her part she had never yet been guilty of so mean and pitiful a weakness as to forgive any one; for to pardon an injury always showed either want of spirit to feel it, or want of power to resent it. She was resolved she would never squander the money for which she had worked early and late, on a baggage who had thrown herself away on a beggar, while she had a daughter single, who might yet raise her family by a great match. I am sorry to say that Mrs. Bragwell's anger was not owing to the undutifulness of the daughter, or the worthlessness of the husband; poverty was in her eyes the grand crime. The doctrine of forgiveness, as a religious principle, made no more a part of Mr. Bragwell's system than of his wife's; but in natural feeling, particularly for his offending daughter, he much exceeded her.

In a few months the youngest Miss Bragwell desired leave to return home from Mr. Worthy's. She had, indeed, only consented to go thither as a less evil of the two, than staying in her father's house after her sister's elopement. But the sobriety and simplicity of Mr. Worthy's family were irksome to her. Habits of vanity and idleness were become so rooted in her mind, that any degree of restraint was a burthen; and though she was outwardly civil, it was easy to see that she longed to get away. She resolved, however, to profit by her sister's faults; and made her parents easy by assuring them she never would throw herself away on a *man who was worth nothing*. Encouraged by these promises, which her parents thought included the whole sum and substance of human wisdom, and which was all they said they could in reason expect, her father allowed her to come home.

Mr. Worthy, who accompanied her, found Mr. Bragwell gloomy and dejected. As his house was no longer a scene of vanity and festivity, Mr. Bragwell tried to make himself and his friend believe that he was grown religious; whereas he was only become discontented. As he had always fancied that piety was a melancholy, gloomy thing, and as he felt his own

mind really gloomy, he was willing to think that he was growing pious. He had, indeed, gone more constantly to church, and had taken less pleasure in feasting and cards, and now and then read a chapter in the Bible; but all this was because his spirits were low, and not because his heart was changed. The outward actions were more regular, but the inward man was the same. The forms of religion were resorted to as a painful duty: but this only added to his misery, while he was utterly ignorant of its spirit and its power. He still, however, reserved religion as a loathsome medicine, to which he feared he must have recourse at last and of which he even now considered every abstinence from pleasure, or every exercise of piety, as a bitter dose. His health also was impaired, so that his friend found him in a pitiable state, neither able to receive pleasure from the world, which he so dearly loved, nor from religion which he so greatly feared. He expected to have been much commended by Worthy for the change in his way of life; but Worthy, who saw that the alteration was only owing to the loss of animal spirits, and to the casual absence of temptation, was cautious of flattering him too much. 'I thought Mr. Worthy,' said he, 'to have received more comfort from you. I was told too, that religion was full of comfort, but I do not much find it.'—'You were told the truth,' replied Worthy; 'religion is full of comfort, but you must first be brought into a state fit to receive it before it can become so; you must be brought to a deep and humbling sense of sin. To give you comfort while you are puffed up with high thoughts of yourself, would be to give you a strong cordial in a high fever. Religion keeps back her cordial till the patient is lowered and emptied: emptied of self, Mr. Bragwell. If you had a wound, it must be examined and cleansed, ay, and probed too, before it would be safe to put on a healing plaster. Curing it to the outward eye, while it was corrupt at bottom, would only bring on a mortification, and you would be a dead man, while you trusted that the plaster was curing you. You must be, indeed, a Christian before you can be entitled to the comforts of Christianity.'

'I am a Christian,' said Mr. Bragwell; 'many of my friends are Christians, but I do not see it has done us much good.'—'Christianity itself,' answered Worthy, 'cannot make us good, unless it be applied to our hearts. Christian privileges will not make us Christians, unless we make use of them. On that shelf I see stands your medicine. The doctor orders you take it. *Have* you taken it?'—'Yes,' replied Bragwell. 'Are you the better for it?' said Worthy. 'I think I am,' he replied. 'But,' added Mr. Worthy, 'are you the better because the doctor has ordered it merely, or because you have also taken it?'—'What a foolish question,' cried Bragwell; 'Why to be sure the doctor might be the best doctor, and his physic the best physic in the world; but if it stood for ever on the shelf, I could not expect to be cured by it. My doctor is not a mountebank. He does not pretend to cure by a charm. The physic is good, and as it suits my case, though it is bitter, I take it.'

'You have now,' said Mr. Worthy, 'explained undesignedly the reason why religion does so little good in the world. It is not a mountebank; it does not work by a charm; but it offers to cure your worst corruptions by wholesome, though sometimes bitter prescriptions. But you will not take them; you will not apply to God with the same earnest desire to be healed with which you apply to your doctor; you will not confess your sins to one as honestly as you tell your symptoms to the other, nor read your Bible with the same faith and submission with which you take your medicine. In reading it, however, you must take care not to apply to yourself the comforts which are not suited to your case. You must, by the grace of God, be brought into a condition to be entitled to the promises, before you can expect the comfort of them. Conviction is not conversion; that worldly discontent, which is the effect of worldly disappointment, is not that *godly sorrow which worketh repentance.* Besides, while you have been pursuing all the gratifications of the world, do not complain that you have not all the comforts of religion too. Could you live in the full enjoyment of both, the *Bible would not be true.*'

Bragwell. Well, sir, but I do a good action sometimes; and God, who knows he did not make us perfect, will accept it, and for the sake of my good actions will forgive my faults.

Worthy. Depend upon it God will never forgive your sins for the sake of your virtues There is no commutation tax there. But he will forgive them on your sincere repentance, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Goodness is not a single act to be done; so that a man can say, I have achieved it, and the thing is over; but it is a habit that is to be constantly maintained; it is a continual struggle with the opposite vice. No man must reckon himself good for any thing he has already done; though he may consider it as an evidence that he is in the right way, if he feels a constant disposition to resist every evil temper. But every Christian grace will always find work enough; and he must not fancy that because he has conquered once, his virtue may now sit down and take a holyday.

Bragwell. But I thought we Christians, need not be watchful against sin; because Christ, as you so often tell me, died for sinners.

Worthy. Do not deceive yourself: the evangelical doctrines, while they so highly exalt a Saviour do not diminish the heinousness of sin, they rather magnify it. Do not comfort yourself by extenuation or mitigation of sin; but by repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not by diminishing or denying your debt; but by confessing it, by owning you have nothing to pay, that forgiveness is to be hoped.

Bragwell. I don't understand you. You want to have me as good as a saint, and as penitent as a sinner at the same time.

Worthy. I expect of every real Christian, that is, every real penitent, that he should labour to get his heart and life impressed with the stamp of the Gospel. I expect to see him aiming at a conformity in spirit and in practice to the will of God in Jesus Christ. I expect to see him gradually attaining towards an entire change

from his natural self. When I see a man at constant war with those several pursuits and tempers which are with peculiar propriety termed *worldly*, it is a plain proof to me that the change must have passed on him which the gospel emphatically terms becoming 'a new man.'

Bragwell. I hope then I am altered enough to please you. I am sure affliction has made such a change in me, that my best friends hardly know me to be the same man.

Worthy. That is not the change I mean. 'Tis true, from a merry man you are become a gloomy man; but that is because you have been disappointed in your schemes: the principle remains unaltered. A great match for your single daughter would at once restore all the spirits you have lost by the imprudence of your married one. The change the Gospel requires is of quite another cast: it is having 'a new heart and a right spirit;'—it is being 'God's workmanship,'—it is being 'created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works;'—it is becoming 'new creatures;'—it is 'old things being done away, and all things made new;'—it is by so 'learning the truth as it is in Jesus—to the putting off the old man, and putting on the new, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;'—it is by 'partaking of the divine nature.' Pray observe, Mr. Bragwell, these are not my words, nor words picked out of any fanatical book; they are the words of that Gospel you profess to believe; it is not a new doctrine, it is as old as our religion itself. Though I cannot but observe, that men are more reluctant in believing, more averse to adopting this doctrine than almost any other: and indeed I do not wonder at it; for there is perhaps no one which so attacks corruption in its strong holds; no one which so thoroughly prohibits a lazy Christian from uniting a life of sinful indulgence with an outward profession of piety.

Bragwell now seemed resolved to set about the matter in earnest; but he resolved in his own strength: he never thought of applying for assistance to the Fountain of Wisdom; to Him who giveth might to them who have no strength. Unluckily, the very day Mr. Worthy took leave, there happened to be a grand ball at the next town, on account of the assizes. An assize-ball, courteous reader! is a scene to which gentlemen and ladies periodically resort to celebrate the crimes and calamities of their fellow-creatures, by dancing and music, and to divert themselves with feasting and drinking, while unhappy wretches are receiving sentence of death.

To this ball Miss Bragwell went, dressed out with a double portion of finery, pouring out on her head, in addition to her own ornaments, the whole band-box of feathers, beads, and flowers, her sister had left behind her. While she was at the ball her father formed many plans of religious reformation; he talked of lessening his business, that he might have more leisure for devotion; though not *just now*, while the markets were so high; and then he began to think of sending a handsome subscription to the Infirmary; though, on second thoughts he concluded he need not be in a *hurry*, but might as well leave it in his will; though to *give*, and *repent*, and *reform*, were three things he was bent upon. But when his daughter came home at night so happy and so fine! and telling how she had danced with squire Squeeze, the great corn contractor, and how many fine things he had said to her, Mr. Bragwell felt the old spirit of the world return in its full force. A marriage with Mr. Dashall Squeeze, the contractor, was beyond his hopes; for Mr. Squeeze was supposed from a very low beginning to have got rich during the war.

As for Mr. Squeeze, he had picked up as much of the history of his partner between the dances as he desired; he was convinced there would be no money wanting; for Miss Bragwell, who was now looked on as an only child, must needs be a great fortune, and Mr. Squeeze was too much used to advantageous contracts to let this slip. As he was gaudily dressed, and possessed all the arts of vulgar flattery, Miss Bragwell eagerly caught at his proposal to wait on her father next day. Squeeze was quite a man after Bragwell's own heart, a genius at getting money, a fine dashing fellow at spending it. He told his wife that this was the very sort of man for his daughter; for he got money like a Jew and spent it like a prince; but whether it was fairly got, or wisely spent, he was too much a man of the world to inquire. Mrs. Bragwell was not so run away with by appearances, but that she desired her husband to be careful, and make himself quite sure it was the right Mr. Squeeze, and no impostor. But being assured by her husband that Betsey would certainly keep her carriage, she never gave herself one thought with what sort of a man she was to ride in it. To have one of her daughters drive in her own coach, filled up all her ideas of human happiness, and drove the other daughter quite out of her head. The marriage was celebrated with great splendour, and Mr. and Mrs. Squeeze set off for London, where they had taken a house.

Mr. Bragwell now tried to forget that he had any other daughter; and if some thoughts of the resolutions he had made of entering on a more religious course would sometimes force themselves upon him, they were put off, like the repentance of Felix, *to a more convenient season;* and finding he was likely to have a grandchild, he became more worldly and more ambitious than ever; thinking this a just pretence for adding house to house, and field to field. And there is no stratagem by which men more fatally deceive themselves, than when they make even unborn children a pretence for that rapine, or that hoarding, of which their own covetousness is the true motive. Whenever he ventured to write to Mr. Worthy about the wealth, the gayety, and the grandeur of Mr. and Mrs. Squeeze, that faithful friend honestly reminded him of the vanity and uncertainty of worldly greatness, and the error he had been guilty of in marrying his daughter before he had taken time to inquire into the real character of the man, saying, that he could not help foreboding that the happiness of a match made at a ball might have an untimely end.

Notwithstanding Mr. Bragwell had paid down a larger fortune than was prudent, for fear Mr.

Squeeze should fly off, yet he was surprised to receive very soon a pressing letter from him, desiring him to advance a considerable sum, as he had the offer of an advantageous purchase, which he must lose for want of money. Bragwell was staggered, and refused to comply; but his wife told him he must not be shabby to such a gentleman as squire Squeeze; for that she heard on all sides such accounts of their grandeur, their feasts, their carriages, and their liveries, that she and her husband ought even to deny themselves comforts to oblige such a generous son, who did all this in honour of their daughter; besides, if he did not send the money soon, they might be obliged to lay down their coach, and then she should never be able to show her face again. At length Mr. Bragwell lent him the money on his bond; he knew Squeeze's income was large; for he had carefully inquired into this particular, and for the rest he took his word. Mrs. Squeeze also got great presents from her mother, by representing to her how expensively they were forced to live to keep up their credit, and what honour she was conferring on the family of the Bragwells, by spending their money in such grand company. Among many other letters she wrote her the following:

'TO MRS. BRAGWELL.

'You can't imagine, dear mother, how charmingly we live.—I lie a-bed almost all day, and am up all night; but it is never dark for all that, for we burn such numbers of candles all at once, that the sun would be of no use at all in London. Then I am so happy! for we are never quiet a moment, Sundays or working-days; nay, I should not know which was which, only that we have most pleasure on a Sunday; because it is the only day on which people have nothing to do but to divert themselves. Then the great folks are all so kind, and so good; they have not a bit of pride, for they will come and eat and drink, and win my money, just as if I was their equal; and if I have got but a cold, they are so very unhappy that they send to know how I do; and though I suppose they cant rest till the footman has told them, yet they are so polite, that if I have been dying they seem to have forgotten it the next time we meet, and not to know but they have seen me the day before. Oh! they are true friends; and for ever smiling, and so fond of one another, that they like to meet and enjoy one another's company by hundreds, and always think the more the merrier. I shall never be tired of such a delightful life.

'Your dutiful daughter,

'BETSEY SQUEEZE.'

The style of her letters, however, altered in a few months. She owned that though things went on gayer and grander than ever, yet she hardly ever saw her husband, except her house was full of company and cards, or dancing was going on; that he was often so busy abroad he could not come home all night; that he always borrowed the money her mother sent her when he was going out on this nightly business; and that the last time she had asked *him* for money he cursed and swore, and bid her apply to the old farmer and his rib, who were made of money. This letter Mrs. Bragwell concealed from her husband.

At length, on some change in public affairs, Mr. Squeeze, who had made an overcharge of some thousand pounds in one article, lost his contract; he was found to owe a large debt to government, and his accounts must be made up immediately. This was impossible; he had not only spent his large inc without making any provision for his family, but had contracted heavy debts by gaming and other vices. His creditors poured in upon him. He wrote to Bragwell to borrow another sum; but without hinting at the loss of his contract. These repeated demands made Bragwell so uneasy, that instead of sending him the money, he resolved to go himself secretly to London, and judge by his own eyes how things were going on, as his mind strangely misgave him. He got to Mr. Squeeze's house about eleven at night, and knocked gently, concluding that they must needs be gone to bed. But what was his astonishment to find the hall was full of men; he pushed through in spite of them, though to his great surprise they insisted on knowing his name, saying they must carry it to their lady. This affronted him: he refused, saying, 'It is not because I am ashamed of my name, it will pass for thousands in any market in the west of England. Is this your London manners, not to let a man of my credit in without knowing his name indeed!' What was his amazement to see every room as full of card-tables and of fine gentlemen and ladies as it would hold. All was so light, and so gay, and so festive, and so grand, that he reproached himself for his suspicions, thought nothing too good for them, and resolved secretly to give Squeeze another five hundred pounds to help to keep up so much grandeur and happiness. At length seeing a footman he knew, he asked him where were his master and mistress, for he could not pick them out among the company; or rather his ideas were so confused with the splendour of the scene, that he did not know whether they were there or not. The man said, that his master had just sent for his lady up stairs, and he believed that he was not well. Mr. Bragwell said he would go up himself and look for his daughter, as he could not speak so freely to her before all that company.

He went up, knocked at the chamber door, and its not being opened, made him push it with some violence. He heard a bustling noise within, and again made a fruitless attempt to open the door. At this the noise increased, and Mr. Bragwell was struck to the heart at the sound of a pistol from within. He now kicked so violently against the door that it burst open, when the first sight he saw was his daughter falling to the ground in a fit, and Mr. Squeeze dying by a shot from a pistol which was dropping out of his hand. Mr. Bragwell was not the only person whom the sound of the pistol had alarmed. The servants, the company, all heard it, and all ran up to this scene of horror. Those who had the best of the game took care to bring up their tricks in their hands, having had the prudence to leave the very few who could be trusted, to

watch the stakes, while those who had a prospect of losing profited by the confusion, and threw up their cards. All was dismay and terror. Some ran for a surgeon, others examined the dying man; some removed Mrs. Squeeze to her bed, while poor Bragwell could neither see nor hear, nor do any thing. One of the company took up a letter which lay open upon the table, and was addressed to him; they read it, hoping it might explain the horrid mystery. It was as follows:

'TO MR. BRAGWELL.

'Sir—Fetch home your daughter; I have ruined her, myself, and the child to which she every hour expects to be a mother. I have lost my contract. My debts are immense. You refuse me money; I must die then; but I will die like a man of spirit. They wait to take me to prison; I have two executions in my house; but I have ten card-tables in it. I would die as I have lived. I invited all this company, and have drunk hard since dinner to get primed for the dreadful deed. My wife refuses to write to you for another thousand, and she must take the consequences. *Vanity* has been my ruin; it has caused all my crimes. Whoever is resolved to live beyond his income is liable to every sin. He can never say to himself, Thus far shalt thou go and no farther. Vanity led me to commit acts of rapine, that I might live in splendour; vanity makes me commit self-murder, because I will not live in poverty. The new philosophy says, that death is an eternal sleep; but the new philosophy lies. Do you take heed; it is too late for me: the dreadful gulf yawns to swallow me; I plunge into perdition: there is no repentance in the grave, no hope in hell.

Your's, &c.

'DASHALL SQUEEZE.'

The dead body was removed, and Mr. Bragwell remaining almost without speech or motion, the company began to think of retiring, much out of humour at having their party so disagreeably broken up: they comforted themselves, however, that it was *so early* (for it was now scarcely twelve) they could finish their evening at another party or two; so completely do habits of *pleasure*, as it is called, harden the heart, and steel it not only against virtuous impressions, but against natural feelings! Now it was, that those who had nightly rioted at the expense of these wretched people, were the first to abuse them. Not an offer of assistance was made to this poor forlorn woman; not a word of kindness or of pity; nothing but censure was now heard. 'Why must these upstarts ape people of quality?' though as long as these upstarts could feast them, their vulgarity and their bad character had never been produced against them. 'As long as thou dost well unto thyself, men shall speak good of thee.' One guest who, unluckily, had no other house to go to, coolly said, as he walked off, 'Squeeze might as well have put off shooting himself till the morning. It was monstrously provoking that he could not wait an hour or two.'

As every thing in the house was seized, Mr. Bragwell prevailed on his miserable daughter, weak as she was, next morning to set out with him to the country. His acquaintance with polite life was short, but he had seen a great deal in a little time. They had a slow and sad journey. In about a week, Mrs. Squeeze lay-in of a dead child; she herself languished a few days, and then died; and the afflicted parents saw the two darling objects of their ambition, for whose sakes they had made *too much haste to be rich*, carried to the land where all things are forgotten. Mrs. Bragwell's grief, like her other passions, was extravagant; and poor Bragwell's sorrow was rendered so bitter by self-reproach, that he would quite have sunk under it, had he not thought of his old expedient in distress, that of sending for Mr. Worthy to comfort him.

It was Mr. Worthy's way, to warn people of those misfortunes which he saw their faults must needs bring on them; but not to reproach or desert them when the misfortunes came. He had never been near Bragwell, during the short but flourishing reign of the Squeezes: for he knew that prosperity made the ears deaf and the heart hard to counsel; but as soon as he heard his friend was in trouble, he set out to go to him. Bragwell burst into a violent fit of tears when he saw him, and when he could speak, said, 'This trial is more than I can bear.' Mr. Worthy kindly took him by the hand, and when he was a little composed, said, 'I will tell you a short story—There was in ancient times a famous man who was a slave. His master, who was very good to him, one day gave him a bitter melon, and bade him eat it: he ate it up without one word of complaint.—"How was it possible," said the master, "for you to eat so very nauseous and disagreeable a fruit?"—The slave replied, "My good master, I have received so many favours from your bounty, that it is no wonder if I should once in my life eat one bitter melon from your hands."—This generous answer so struck the master, that the history says he gave him his liberty. With such submissive sentiments, my friend, should man receive his portion of sufferings from God, from whom he receives so many blessings. You in particular have received "much good at the hand of God, shall you not receive evil also?"'

'O! Mr. Worthy!' said Bragwell, this blow is too heavy for me, I cannot survive this shock: I do not desire it, I only wish to die.'—'We are very apt to talk most of dying when we are least fit for it,' said Worthy. 'This is not the language of that submission which makes us prepare for death; but of that despair which makes us out of humour with life. O! Mr. Bragwell! you are indeed disappointed of the grand ends which made life so delightful to you; but till your heart is humbled, till you are brought to a serious conviction of sin, till you are brought to see what is the true end of life, you can have no hope in death. You think you have no business on earth, because those for whose sake you too eagerly heaped up riches are no more. But is there not under the canopy of heaven some afflicted being whom you may yet relieve, some modest merit which you may bring forward some helpless creature you may save by your advice, some perishing Christian you may sus-

tain by your wealth? When you have no sins of your own to repent of, no mercies of God to be thankful for, no miseries of others to relieve, then, and not till then, I consent you should sink down in despair, and call on death to relieve you.'

Mr. Worthy attended his afflicted friend to the funeral of his unhappy daughter and her babe. The solemn service, the committing his late gay and beautiful daughter to darkness, to worms, and to corruption;—the sight of the dead infant, for whose sake he had resumed all his schemes of vanity and covetousness, when he thought he had got the better of them;—the melancholy conviction that all human prosperity ends in *ashes to ashes, and dust to dust*, has brought down Mr. Bragwell's self-sufficient and haughty soul into something of that humble frame in which Mr. Worthy had wished to see it. As soon as they returned home, he was beginning to seize the favourable moment for fixing these serious impressions, when they were unseasonably interrupted by the parish officer, who came to ask Mr. Bragwell what he was to do with a poor dying woman who was travelling the country with her child, and was taken in a fit under the church-yard wall? 'At first they thought she was dead,' said the man, 'but finding she still breathed, they have carried her into the workhouse till she could give some account of herself.'

Mr. Bragwell was impatient at the interruption, which was indeed unseasonable, and told the man that he was at that time too much overcome by sorrow to attend to business, but he would give him an answer to-morrow. 'But, my friend,' said Mr. Worthy, 'the poor woman may die to-night; your mind is indeed not in a frame for worldly business; but there is no sorrow too great to forbid our attending the calls of duty. An act of Christian charity will not disturb, but improve the seriousness of your spirit; and though you cannot dry your own tears, God may in great mercy permit you to dry those of another. This may be one of those occasions for which I told you life was worth keeping. Do let us see this woman.'—Bragwell was not in a state either to consent or refuse, and his friend drew him to the workhouse, about the door of which stood a crowd of people. 'She is not dead,' said one, 'she moves her head.'—'But she wants air,' said all of them, while they all, according to custom, pushed so close upon her that it was impossible she could get any. A fine boy of two or three years old stood by her, crying, 'Mammy is dead, mammy is starved.' Mr. Worthy made up to the poor woman, holding his friend by the arm: in order to give her air he untied a large black bonnet which hid her face, when Mr. Bragwell, at that moment casting his eyes on her saw in this poor stranger the face of his own runaway daughter, Mrs. Incle. He groaned, but could not speak; and as he was turning away to conceal his anguish, the little boy fondly caught hold of his hand, lisping out,—'O stay and give mammy some bread!' His heart yearned towards the child; he grasped his little hand in his, while he sorrowfully said to Mr. Worthy, 'It is too much, send away the people. It is my dear naughty child; '*my punishment greater than I can bear.*'' Mr. Worthy desired the people to go and leave the stranger to them; but by this time she was no stranger to any of them. Pale and meagre as was her face, and poor and shabby as was her dress, the proud and flaunting Miss Polly Bragwell was easily known by every one present. They went away, but with the mean revenge of little minds, they paid themselves by abuse, for all the airs and insolence they had once endured from her.—'Pride must have a fall,' said one. 'I remember when she was too good to speak to a poor body,' said another. 'Where are her flounces and furbelows now? It is come home to her at last: her child looks as if he would be glad of the worst bit she formerly denied us.'

In the mean time Mr. Bragwell had sunk into an old wicker chair which stood behind, and groaned out, 'Lord, forgive my hard heart! Lord, subdue my proud heart, *create a clean heart, O God! and renew a right spirit within me.*' This was perhaps the first words of genuine prayer he had ever offered up in his whole life. Worthy overheard it, and in his heart rejoiced; but this was not a time for talking, but doing. He asked Bragwell what was to be done with the unfortunate woman, who now seemed to recover fast, but she did not see them, for they were behind. She embraced her boy, and faintly said, 'My child what shall we do? *I will arise and go to my father, and say unto him, father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee.*' This was a joyful sound to Mr. Worthy, who was inclined to hope that her heart might be as much changed for the better as her circumstances were altered for the worse; and he valued the goods of fortune so little, and contrition of soul so much, that he began to think the change on the whole might be a happy one. The boy then sprung from his mother, and ran to Bragwell, saying, 'Do be good to mammy.' Mrs. Incle looking round, now perceived her father; she fell at his feet, saying, 'O forgive your guilty child, and save your innocent one from starving!'—Bragwell sunk down by her, and prayed God to forgive both her and himself in terms of genuine sorrow. To hear words of real penitence and heart-felt prayer from this once high-minded father and vain daughter, was music to Worthy's ears, who thought this moment of outward misery was the only joyful one he had ever spent in the Bragwell family.

He was resolved not to interfere, but to let the father's own feelings work out the way into which he was to act.

Bragwell said nothing, but slowly led to his own house, holding the little boy by the hand, and pointing to Worthy to assist the feeble steps of his daughter, who once more entered her father's doors; but the dread of seeing her mother quite overpowered her.—Mrs. Bragwell's heart was not changed, but sorrow had weakened her powers of resistance; and she rather suffered her daughter to come in, than gave her a kind reception. She was more astonished than pleased; and even in this trying moment, was more disgusted with the little boy's mean clothes, than delighted with his rosy face. As

soon as she was a little recovered, Mr. Bragwell desired his daughter to tell him how she happened to be at that place at that time.

In a weak voice she began; 'My tale, sir, is short, but mournful.'—Now, I am very sorry that my readers must wait for this short, but mournful tale, a little longer.

PART VII.

MRS. INCLE'S STORY.

'I LEFT your house dear father,' said Mrs. Incle, 'with a heart full of vain triumph. I had no doubt but my husband was a great man, who put on that disguise to obtain my hand. Judge then what I felt to find that he was a needy impostor, who wanted my money, but did not care for me. This discovery, though it mortified, did not humble me. I had neither affection to bear with the man who had deceived me, nor religion to improve by the disappointment. I have found that change of circumstances does not change the heart, till God is pleased to do it. My misfortune only taught me to rebel more against him. I thought God unjust; I accused my father, I was envious of my sister, I hated my husband; but never once did I blame myself.

'My husband picked up a wretched subsistence by joining himself to any low scheme of idle pleasure that was going on. He would follow a mountebank, carry a dice-box, or fiddle at a fair. He was always taunting me for that gentility on which I so much valued myself.—'If I had married a poor working girl,' said he, she could now have got her bread; but a fine lady without money is a disgrace to herself, a burthen to her husband, and a plague to society.' Every trial which affection might have made lighter, we doubled by animosity: at length my husband was detected in using false dice; he fought with his accuser, both were seized by a press-gang, and sent to sea. I was now left to the wide world; and miserable as I had thought myself before, I soon found there were higher degrees of misery. I was near my time, without bread for myself, or hope for my child. I set out on foot in search of the village where I had heard my husband say his friends lived. It was a severe trial to my proud heart to stoop to those low people; but hunger is not delicate, and I was near perishing. My husband's parents received me kindly, saying, that though they had nothing but what they earned by their labour, yet I was welcome to share their hard fare; for they trusted that God who sent mouths would send meat also.—They gave me a small room in their cottage, and furnished me with many necessaries, which they denied themselves.'

'O! my child!' interrupted Bragwell, 'every word cuts me to the heart. These poor people gladly gave thee of their little, while thy rich parents left thee to starve.'

'How shall I own,' continued Mrs. Incle, 'that all this goodness could not soften my heart; for God had not yet touched it. I received all their kindness as a favour done to them; and thought them sufficiently rewarded for their attentions by the rank and merit of their daughter-in-law. When my father brought me home any little dainty which he could pick up, and my mother kindly dressed it for me, I would not condescend to eat it with them, but devoured it sullenly in my little garret alone: suffering them to fetch and carry every thing I wanted. As my haughty behaviour was not likely to gain their affection, it was plain they did not love me: and as I had no notion that there were any motives to good actions but fondness, or self-interest, I was puzzled to know what could make them so kind to me; for of the powerful and constraining law of Christian charity I was quite ignorant. To cheat the weary hours, I looked about for some books, and found, among a few others of the same cast, 'Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul.' But all those sort of books were addressed to *sinners;* now as I knew I was not a sinner, I threw them away in disgust. Indeed they were ill suited to a taste formed by plays and novels, to which reading I chiefly trace my ruin; for, vain as I was, I should never have been guilty of so wild a step as to run away, had not my heart been tainted and my imagination inflamed by those pernicious books.

'At length my little George was born. This added to the burthen I had brought on this poor family, but it did not diminish their kindness; and we continued to share their scanty fare without any upbraiding on their part, or any gratitude on mine. Even this poor baby did not soften my heart; I wept over him, indeed, day and night, but they were tears of despair; I was always idle, and wasted those hours in sinful murmurs at his fate, which I should have employed in trying to maintain him. Hardship, grief, and impatience, at length brought on a fever. Death seemed now at hand, and I felt a gloomy satisfaction in the thought of being rid of my miseries, to which I fear was added a sullen joy, to think that you, sir, and my mother, would be plagued to hear of my death when it would be too late; and in this your grief I anticipated a gloomy sort of revenge. But it pleased my merciful God not to let me thus perish in my sins. My poor mother-in-law sent for a good clergyman, who pointed out the danger of dying in that hard and unconverted state so forcibly, that I shuddered to find on what a dreadful precipice I stood. He prayed with me, and for me so earnestly, that at length God, who is sometimes pleased to magnify his own glory in awakening those who are dead in trespasses and sins, was pleased of his free grace, to open my blind eyes, and soften my stony heart. I saw myself a sinner, and prayed to be delivered from the wrath of God, in comparison of which the poverty and disgrace I now suffered appeared as nothing. To a soul convinced of sin, the news of a Redeemer was a joyful sound. Instead of reproaching Providence, or blaming my parents, or abusing my husband, I now learnt to condemn myself, to adore that God who had not cut me off in my ignorance, to pray for pardon for the past, and grace for the time to come. I now desired to submit to penury and

hunger, so that I might but live in the fear of God in this world, and enjoy his favour in the next. I now learnt to compare my present light sufferings, the consequence of my own sin, with those bitter sufferings of my Saviour, which he endured for my sake, and I was ashamed of murmuring. But self-ignorance, conceit, and vanity were so rooted in me, that my progress was very gradual, and I had the sorrow to feel how much the power of long bad habits keeps down the growth of religion in the heart, even after the principle itself has begun to take root. I was so ignorant of divine things, that I hardly knew words to frame a prayer; but when I got acquainted with the Psalms, I there learnt how to pour out the fulness of my heart, while in the Gospel I rejoiced to see what great things God had done for my soul.

'I now took down once more from the shelf 'Doddridge's Rise and Progress;' and oh! with what new eyes did I read it! I now saw clearly, that not only the thief and the drunkard, the murderer and the adulterer are sinners, for that I knew before; but I found that the unbeliever, the selfish, the proud, the worldly-minded, all, in short, who live without God in the world, are sinners. I did not now apply the reproofs I met with to my husband, or my father; or other people, as I used to do; but brought them home to myself. In this book I traced, with strong emotions and close self-application, the sinner through all his course; his first awakening, his convictions, repentance, joys, sorrows, backsliding, and recovery, despondency, and delight, to a triumphant death-bed; and God was pleased to make it a chief instrument in bringing me to himself. 'Here it is,' continued Mrs. Incle, untying her little bundle, and taking out a book; 'accept it, my dear father, and I will pray that God may bless it to you, as He has done to me.

'When I was able to come down, I passed my time with these good old people, and soon won their affection. I was surprised to find they had very good sense, which I never had thought poor people could have; but, indeed, worldly persons do not know how much religion, while it mends the heart, enlightens the understanding also. I now regretted the evenings I had wasted in my solitary garret, when I might have passed them in reading the Bible with these good folks. This was their refreshing cordial after a weary day, which sweetened the pains of want and age. I one day expressed my surprise that my unfortunate husband, the son of such pious parents, should have turned out so ill: the poor old man said with tears, 'I fear we have been guilty of the sin of Eli; our love was of the wrong sort. Alas! like him, *we honoured our son more than God*, and God has smitten us for it. We showed him by our example, what was right; but through a false indulgence, we did not correct him for what was wrong. We were blind to his faults. He was a handsome boy, with sprightly parts: we took too much delight in these outward things. He soon got above our management, and became vain, idle, and extravagant; and when we sought to restrain him, it was then too late. We humbled ourselves before God; but he was pleased to make our sin become its own punishment. Timothy grew worse and worse, till he was forced to abscond for a misdemeanour; after which we never saw him, but have often heard of him changing from one idle way of life to another; *unstable as water*, he has been a footman, a soldier, a shopman, a gambler, and a strolling actor. With deep sorrow we trace back his vices to our ungoverned fondness, that lively and sharp wit, by which he has been able to carry on such a variety of wild schemes, might, if we had used him to bear reproof in his youth, have enabled him to have done great service for God and his country. But our flattery made him wise in his own conceit; and there is more hope of a fool than of him. We indulged our own vanity, and have destroyed his soul.'

Here Mr. Worthy stopped Mrs. Incle, saying, that whenever he heard it lamented that the children of pious parents often turned out so ill, he could not help thinking that there must be frequently something of this sort of error in the bringing them up: he knew, indeed, some instances to the contrary, in which the best means had failed; but he believed, that from Eli the priest, to Incle the labourer, much more than half the failures of this sort might be traced to some mistake, or vanity, or bad judgment, or sinful indulgence in the parents.

'I now looked about,' continued Mrs. Incle, 'in order to see in what I could assist my poor mother; regretting more heartily than she did, that I knew no one thing that was of any use. I was so desirous of humbling myself before God and her, that I offered even to try to wash.'—'You wash!' exclaimed Bragwell, starting up with great emotion, 'Heaven forbid, that with such a fortune and education, Miss Bragwell should be seen at a washing-tub.' This vain father, who could bear to hear of her distresses and her sins, could not bear to hear of her washing. Mr. Worthy stopped him, saying, 'As to her fortune, you know you refused to give her any; and as to her education, you see it had not taught her how to do any thing better. I am sorry you do not see in this instance, the beauty of Christian humility. For my own part, I set a greater value on such an active proof of it, than on a whole volume of professions.'—Mr. Bragwell did not quite understand this, and Mrs. Incle went on. 'What to do to get a penny I knew not. Making of filagree, or fringe, or card-purses, or cutting out paper, or dancing and singing was of no use in our village. The shopkeeper, indeed, would have taken me, if I had known any thing of accounts; and the clergyman could have got me a nursery-maid's place, if I could have done good plain-work. I made some awkward attempts to learn to spin and knit, when my mother's wheel or knitting lay by, but I spoiled both through my ignorance. At last I luckily thought upon the fine netting I used to make for my trimmings, and it struck me that I might turn this to some little account. I procured some twine, and worked early and late to make nets for fishermen, and cabbage-nets. I was so pleased that I had at last found an opportunity to show my good will by this mean work, that I regretted my little George was not big enough to contribute

his share to our support, by travelling about to sell my nets.'

'Cabbage-nets!' exclaimed Bragwell; 'there is no bearing this.—Cabbage-nets! My grandson hawk cabbage-nets! How could you think of such a scandalous thing?' 'Sir,' said Mrs. Incle mildly, 'I am now convinced that nothing is scandalous which is not wicked. Besides, we were in want; and necessity, as well as piety, would have reconciled me to this mean trade.' Mr. Bragwell groaned, and bade her go on.

'In the mean time my little George grew a fine boy; and I adored the goodness of God, who in the sweetness of maternal love, had given me a reward for many sufferings. Instead of indulging a gloomy distrust about the fate of this child, I now resigned him to the will of God. Instead of lamenting because he was not likely to be rich, I was resolved to bring him up with such notions as might make him contented to be poor. I thought if I could subdue all vanity and selfishness in him, I should make him a happier man than if I had thousands to bestow on him; and I trusted that I should be rewarded for every painful act of self-denial, by the future virtue and happiness of my child. Can you believe it, my dear father, my days now passed not unhappily; I worked hard all day, and that alone is a source of happiness beyond what the idle can guess. After my child was asleep at night, I read a chapter in the Bible to my parents, whose eyes now began to fail them. We then thanked God over our frugal supper of potatoes, and talked over the holy men of old, the saints, and the martyrs, who would have thought our homely fare a luxury. We compared our peace, and liberty, and safety, with their bonds, and imprisonment, and tortures; and should have been ashamed of a murmur. We then joined in prayer, in which my absent parents and my husband were never forgotten, and went to rest in charity with the whole world, and at peace in our own souls.'

'Oh! my forgiving child!' interrupted Mr. Bragwell, sobbing; 'and didst thou really pray for thy unnatural father? and didst thou lay thee down in rest and peace? Then, let me tell thee, thou wast better off than thy mother and I were.—But no more of this; go on.'

'Whether my father-in-law had worked beyond his strength, in order to support me and my child, I know not, but he was taken dangerously ill. While he lay in this state, he received an account that my husband was dead in the West-Indies of the yellow fever, which has carried off such numbers of our countrymen: we all wept together, and prayed that his awful death might quicken us in preparing for our own. This shock, joined to the fatigue of nursing her sick husband, soon brought my poor mother to death's door. I nursed them both, and felt a satisfaction in giving them all I had to bestow, my attendance, my tears, and my prayers. I, who was once so nice and so proud, so disdainful in the midst of plenty, and so impatient under the smallest inconvenience, was now enabled to glorify God by my activity and by my submission. Though the sorrows of my heart were enlarged, I cast my burthen on Him who cares for the weary and heavy laden. After having watched by these poor people the whole night, I sat down to breakfast on my dry crust and coarse dish of tea, without a murmur: my greatest grief was, lest I should bring away the infection to my dear boy; for the fever was now become putrid. I prayed to know what it was my duty to do between my dying parents and my helpless child. To take care of the sick and aged, seemed to be my first duty; so I offered up my child to Him who is the father of the fatherless, and he in mercy spared him to me.

'The cheerful piety with which these good people breathed their last, proved to me, that the temper of mind with which the pious poor commonly meet death, is the grand compensation made them by Providence for all the hardships of their inferior condition. If they have had few joys and comforts in life already, and have still fewer hopes in store, is not all fully made up to them by their being enabled to leave this world with stronger desires of heaven, and without those bitter regrets after the good things of this life, which add to the dying tortures of the worldly rich? To the forlorn and destitute, death is not so terrible as it is to him who *sits at ease in his possessions*, and who fears that this night his soul shall be required of him.'

Mr. Bragwell felt this remark more deeply than his daughter meant he should. He wept, and bade her proceed.

'I followed my departed parents to the same grave, and wept over them, but not as one who had no hope. They had neither houses nor lands to leave me, but they left me their Bible, their blessing, and their example, of which I humbly trust I shall feel the benefits when all the riches of this world shall have an end. Their few effects, consisting of some poor household goods, and some working-tools, hardly sufficed to pay their funeral expenses. I was soon attacked with the same fever, and saw myself, as I thought, dying the second time; my danger was the same, but my views were changed. I now saw eternity in a more awful light than I had done before, when I wickedly thought death might be gloomily called upon as a refuge from every common trouble. Though I had still reason to be humble on account of my sin, yet, by the grace of God, I saw death stripped of his sting and robbed of his terrors, *through him who loved me, and gave himself for me;* and in the extremity of pain, *my soul rejoiced in God my Saviour.*

'I recovered, however, and was chiefly supported by the kind clergyman's charity. When I felt myself nourished and cheered by a little tea or broth, which he daily sent me from his own slender provision, my heart smote me, to think how I had daily sat down at home to a plentiful dinner, without any sense of thankfulness for my own abundance, or without inquiring whether my poor sick neighbours were starving: and I sorrowfully remembered, that what my poor sister and I used to waste through daintiness, would now have comfortably fed myself and child. Believe me, my dear mother, a labouring man who has been brought low by a fever, might often be restored to his work some weeks sooner, if on his recovery he was nou-

rished and strengthened by a good bit from a farmer's table. Less than is often thrown to a favourite spaniel would suffice; so that the expense would be almost nothing to the giver, while to the receiver it would bring health, and strength, and comfort, and recruited life. And it is with regret I must observe, that young women in our station are less attentive to the comforts of the poor, less active in visiting the cottages of the sick, less desirous of instructing the young, and working for the aged, than many ladies of higher rank. The multitude of opportunities of this sort which we neglect, among the families of our father's distressed tenants and workmen, will I fear, one day appear against us.

'By the time I was tolerably recovered, I was forced to leave the house. I had no human prospect of subsistence. I humbly asked of God to direct my steps, and to give me entire obedience to his will. I then cast my eye mournfully on my child; and though prayer had relieved my heart of a load which without it would have been intolerable, my tears flowed fast, while I cried out in the bitterness of my soul, *How many hired servants of my father have bread enough, and to spare, and I perish with hunger.* This text appeared a kind of answer to my prayer, and gave me courage to make one more attempt to soften you in my favour. I resolved to set out directly to find you, to confess my disobedience, and to beg a scanty pittance, with which I and my child might be meanly supported in some distant country, where we should not, by our presence, disgrace our more happy relations. We set out and travelled as fast as my weak health and poor George's little feet and ragged shoes would permit. I brought a little bundle of such work and necessaries as I had left, by selling which we subsisted on the road.'—'I hope,' interrupted Bragwell, 'there were no cabbage-nets in it?'—'At least,' said her mother, 'I hope you did not sell them near home?'—'No; I had none left, said Mrs. Incle, 'or I should have done it. I got many a lift in a wagon for my child and my bundle, which was a great relief to me, as I should have had both to carry. And here I cannot help saying, I wish drivers would not be too hard in their demands, if they help a poor sick traveller on a mile or two, it proves a great relief to weary bodies and naked feet; and such little cheap charities may be considered as *the cup of cold water*, which, if given on right grounds, *shall not lose its reward*.' Here Bragwell sighed to think that when mounted on his fine bay mare, or driving his neat chaise, it had never once crossed his mind that the poor way-worn foot traveller was not equally at his ease, nor had it ever occurred to him that shoes were a necessary accommodation. Those who want nothing are apt to forget how many there are who want every thing. Mrs. Incle went on: 'I got to this village about seven this evening; and while I sat on the church yard wall to rest and meditate how I should make myself known at home, I saw a funeral; I inquired whose it was, and learnt it was my sister's. This was too much for me, and I sank down in a fit, and knew nothing that happened to me from that moment, till I found myself in the workhouse with my father and Mr. Worthy.'

Here Mrs. Incle stopped. Grief, shame, pride, and remorse, had quite overcome Mr. Bragwell. He wept like a child, and said he hoped his daughter would pray for him; for that he was not in a condition to pray for himself, though he found nothing else could give him any comfort. His deep dejection brought on a fit of sickness. 'O! said he, I now begin to feel an expression in the sacrament which I used to repeat without thinking it had any meaning, the *remembrance of my sins is grievous, the burthen of them is intolerable.* O! it is awful to think what a sinner a man may be, and yet retain a decent character! How many thousands are in my condition, taking to themselves all the credit of their prosperity, instead of giving God the glory! heaping up riches to their hurt, instead of dealing their bread to the hungry! O! let those who hear of the Bragwell family, never say that *vanity is a little sin.* In *me* it has been the fruitful parent of a thousand sins—selfishness, hardness of heart, forgetfulness of God. In one of my sons, vanity was the cause of rapine, injustice extravagance, ruin, self-murder. Both my daughters were undone by vanity, though it only wore the more harmless shape of dress, idleness, and dissipation. The husband of my daughter Incle it destroyed, by leading him to live above his station, and to despise labour. Vanity ensnared the souls even of his pious parents, for while it led them to wish their son in a better condition, it led them to allow such indulgences as were unfit for his own. O! you who hear of us, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God; resist high thoughts; let every imagination be brought into obedience to the Son of God. If you set a value on finery look into that grave; behold the mouldering body of my Betsey, who now says to *Corruption, thou art my father, and to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister.* Look to the bloody and brainless head of her husband. O, Mr. Worthy, how does Providence mock at human foresight! I have been greedy of gain, that the son of Mr. Squeeze might be a great man; he is dead; while the child of Timothy Incle, whom I had doomed to beggary, will be my heir. Mr. Worthy, to you I commit this boy's education; teach him to value his immortal soul more, and the good things of this life less than I have done. Bring him up in the fear of God, and in the government of his passions. Teach him that unbelief and pride are at the root of all sin. I have found this to my cost. I trusted in my riches; I said, "to-morrow shall be as this day and more abundant." I did not remember that *for all these things God would bring me to judgment.* I am not sure that I believed in a judgment: I am not sure that I believed in a God.'

Bragwell at length grew better, but he never recovered his spirits. The conduct of Mrs. Incle through life was that of an humble Christian. She sold all her sister's finery which her father had given her, and gave the money to the poor; saying, 'It did not become one who professed penitence to return to the gayeties of life.' Mr. Bragwell did not oppose this; not that he had fully acquired a just notion of the self-denying

spirit of religion, but having a head not very clear at making distinctions, he was never able, after the sight of Squeeze's mangled body, to think of gayety and grandeur, without thinking at the same time of a pistol and bloody brains; for, at his first introduction into gay life had presented him with all these objects at one view, he never afterwards could separate them in his mind. He even kept his fine beaufet of plate always shut; because it brought to his mind the grand unpaid-for sideboard that he had seen laid out for Mr. Squeeze's supper, to the remembrance of which he could not help tacking the idea of debts, prisons, executions, and self-murder.

Mr. Bragwell's heart had been so buried in the love of the world, and evil habits had become so rooted in him, that the progress he made in religion was very slow; yet he earnestly prayed and struggled against sin and vanity; and when his unfeeling wife declared she could not love the boy unless he was called by their name instead of Incle, Mr. Bragwell would never consent, saying he stood in need of every help against pride. He also got the letter which Squeeze wrote just before he shot himself, framed and glazed; this he hung up in his chamber, and made it a rule to go and read it as often as he found his heart disposed to VANITY.

'TIS ALL FOR THE BEST.*

'IT is all for the best,' said Mrs. Simpson, whenever any misfortune befel her. She had got such a habit of vindicating Providence, that instead of weeping and wailing under the most trying dispensations, her chief care was to convince herself and others, that however great might be her sufferings, and however little they could be accounted for at present, yet that the Judge of all the earth could not but do right. Instead of trying to clear herself from any possible blame that might attach to her under those misfortunes which, to speak after the manner of men, she might seem not to have *deserved*, she was always the first to justify Him who had inflicted it. It was not that she superstitiously converted every visitation into a *punishment;* she entertained more correct ideas of that God who overrules all events. She knew that some calamities were sent to exercise her faith, others to purify her heart; some to chastise her rebellious will, and all to remind her that this 'was not her rest;' that this world was not the scene, for the full and final display of retributive justice. The honour of God was dearer to her than her own credit, and her chief desire was to turn all events to his glory.

Though Mrs. Simpson was the daughter of a clergyman, and the widow of a genteel tradesman, she had been reduced by a succession of misfortunes, to accept of a room in an alms-house. Instead of repining at the change; instead of dwelling on her former gentility and saying, 'how handsomely she had lived once; and how hard it was to be reduced; and she little thought ever to end her days in an alms-house;' which is the common language of those who were never so well off before; she was thankful that such an asylum was provided for want and age; and blessed God that it was to the Christian dispensation alone that such pious institutions owed their birth.

One fine evening, as she was sitting reading her Bible on the little bench shaded with honey-suckles, just before her door, who should come and sit down by her but Mrs. Betty, who had formerly been lady's maid at the nobleman's house in the village of which Mrs. Simpson's father had been minister.—Betty, after a life of vanity, was, by a train of misfortunes, brought to this very alms-house; and though she had taken no care by frugality and prudence to avoid it, she thought it a hardship and disgrace, instead of being thankful, as she ought to have been, for such a retreat. At first she did not know Mrs. Simpson; her large bonnet, cloak, and brown stuff gown (for she always made her appearance conform to her circumstances) being very different from the dress she had been used to wear when Mrs. Betty has seen her dining at the great house; and time and sorrow had much altered her countenance. But when Mrs. Simpson kindly addressed her as an old acquaintance, she screamed with surprise—'What! you, madam?' cried she: 'you in an alms-house, living on charity: 'you, who used to be so charitable yourself, that you never suffered any distress in the parish which you could prevent?' 'That may be one reason, Betty,' replied Mrs. Simpson, 'why Providence has provided this refuge for my old age.—And my heart overflows with gratitude when I look back on his goodness. 'No such great goodness, methinks,' said Betty; 'why you were born and bred a lady, and are now reduced to live in an alms-house. 'Betty, I was born and bred a sinner, undeserving of the mercies I have received.' 'No such great mercies,' said Betty. 'Why, I heard you had been turned out of doors; that your husband had broke; and that you had been in danger of starving, though I did not know what was be, come of you. 'It is all true, Betty, glory be to God! it is all true.'

'Well,' said Betty, 'you are an odd sort of a gentlewoman. If from a prosperous condition I had been made a bankrupt, a widow, and a beggar, I should have thought it no such mighty matter to be thankful for: but there is no accounting for taste. The neighbours used to say that all your troubles must needs be a judgment upon you; but I who knew how good you were,

* A profligate wit of a neighbouring country having attempted to turn this doctrine into ridicule, under the same title here assumed, it occurred to the author that it might not be altogether useless to illustrate the same doctrine on Christian principles.

thought it very hard you should suffer so much; but now I see you reduced to an alms-house, I beg your pardon, madam, but I am afraid the neighbours were in the right, and that so many misfortunes could never have happened to you without you had committed a great many sins to deserve them; for I always thought that God is so just that he punishes us for all our bad actions, and rewards us for all our good ones.' 'So he does, Betty; but he does it in his own way, and at his own time, and not according to our notions of good and evil; for his ways are not as our ways.—God, indeed, punishes the bad, and rewards the good; but he does not do it fully and finally in this world. Indeed he does not set such a value on outward things as to make riches, and rank, and beauty, and health, the reward of piety; that would be acting like weak and erring men, and not like a just and holy God. Our belief in a future state of rewards and punishments is not always so strong as it ought to be, even now; but how totally would our faith fail, if we regularly saw every thing made even in this world. We shall lose nothing by having pay-day put off. The longest voyages make the best returns. So far am I from thinking that God is less just, and future happiness less certain, because I see the wicked sometimes prosper, and the righteous suffer in this world, that I am rather led to believe that God is more just and heaven more certain: for, in the first place, God will not put off his favourite children with so poor a lot as the good things of this world; and next, seeing that the best men here below do not often attain to the best things; why it only serves to strengthen my belief that they are not the best things in His eye; and He has most assuredly reserved for those that love Him such 'good things as eye has not seen nor ear heard.' God, by keeping man in Paradise while he was innocent, and turning him into this world as soon as he had sinned, gave a plain proof that he never intended the world, even in its happiest state, as a place of reward. My father gave me good principles and useful knowledge; and while he taught me by a habit of constant employment, to be, if I may so say, independent of the world; yet he led me to a constant sense of dependence on God.' 'I do not see, however,' interrupted Mrs. Betty, 'that your religion has been of any use to you. It has been so far from preserving you from trouble, that I think you have had more than the usual share.'

'No,' said Mrs. Simpson; 'nor did Christianity ever pretend to exempt its followers from trouble; this is no part of the promise. Nay, the contrary is rather stipulated; 'in the world ye shall have tribulation.'—But if it has not taught me to escape sorrow, I humbly hope it has taught me how to bear it. If it has taught me not to feel, it has taught me not to murmur. I will tell you a little of my story. As my father could save little or nothing for me, he was very desirous of seeing me married to a young gentleman in the neighbourhood, who expressed a regard for me. But while he was anxiously engaged in bringing this about, my good father died.'

'How very unlucky!' interrupted Betty.

'No, Betty,' replied Mrs. Simpson, 'it was very providential; this man, though he maintained a decent character, had a good fortune, and lived soberly, yet he would not have made me happy.' 'Why what could you want more of a man?' said Betty. 'Religion,' returned Mrs. Simpson. 'As my father made a creditable appearance, and was very charitable; and as I was an only child, this gentleman concluded that he could give me a considerable fortune; for he did not know that all the poor in his parish are the children of every pious clergyman. Finding I had little or nothing left me, he withdrew his attentions.' 'What a sad thing!' cried Betty. 'No, it was all for the best; Providence overruled his covetousness for my good. I could not have been happy with a man whose soul was set on the perishable things of this world; nor did I esteem him, though I laboured to submit my own inclinations to those of my kind father. The very circumstance of being left pennyless produced the direct contrary effect on Mr. Simpson: he was a sensible young man, engaged in a prosperous business: we had long highly valued each other; but while my father lived, he thought me above his hopes. We were married; I found him an amiable, industrious, good-tempered man; he respected religion and religious people; but with excellent dispositions, I had the grief to find him less pious than I had hoped. He was ambitious, and a little too much immersed in worldly schemes; and though I knew it was all done for my sake, yet that did not blind me so far as to make me think it right. He attached himself so eagerly to business, that he thought every hour lost in which he was not doing something that would tend to raise me to what he called my proper rank. The more prosperous he grew the less religious he became; and I began to find that one might be unhappy with a husband one tenderly loved. One day as he was standing on some steps to reach down a parcel of goods he fell from the top and broke his leg in two places.'

'What a dreadful misfortune!' said Mrs. Betty.—'What a signal blessing!' said Mrs. Simpson. 'Here I am sure I had reason to say all was for the best; from that very hour in which my outward troubles began, I date the beginning of my happiness. Severe suffering, a near prospect of death, absence from the world, silence, reflection, and above all, the divine blessings on the prayers and scriptures I read to him, were the means used by our merciful Father to turn my husband's heart.—During this confinement he was awakened to a deep sense of his own sinfulness, of the vanity of all this world has to bestow, and of his great need of a Saviour. It was many months before he could leave his bed; during this time his business was neglected. His principal clerk took advantage of his absence to receive large sums of money in his name, and absconded. On hearing of this great loss, our creditors came faster upon us than we could answer their demands; they grew more impatient as we were less able to satisfy them; one misfortune followed another; till at length Mr. Simpson became a bankrupt.'

'What an evil!' exclaimed Mrs. Betty. 'Yet

it led in the end to much good,' resumed Mrs. Simpson. 'We were forced to leave the town in which we had lived with so much credit and comfort, and to betake ourselves to a mean lodging in a neighbouring village, till my husband's strength should be recruited, and till we could have time to look about us and see what was to be done. The first night we got to this poor dwelling, my husband felt very sorrowful, not for his own sake, but that he had brought so much poverty on me, whom he had so dearly loved: I on the contrary, was unusually cheerful: for the blessed change in his mind had more than reconciled me to the sad change in his circumstances. I was contented to live with him in a poor cottage for a few years on earth, if it might contribute to our spending a blessed eternity together in heaven. I said to him, 'Instead of lamenting that we are now reduced to want all the comforts of life, I have sometimes been almost ashamed to live in the full enjoyments of them, when I have reflected that my Saviour not only chose to deny himself all these enjoyments, but even to live a life of hardship for my sake; not one of his numerous miracles tended to his own comfort: and though we read at different times that he both hungered and thirsted, yet it was not for his own gratification that he once changed water into wine; and I have often been struck with the near position of that chapter in which this miracle is recorded, to that in which he thirsted for a draught of water at the well in Samaria.* It was for others, not himself, that even the humble sustenance of barley bread was multiplied. See here, we have a bed left us; I had, indeed, nothing but straw to stuff it with, but the Saviour of the world, 'had not where to lay his head.' My husband smiled through his tears, and we sat down to supper; It consisted of a roll and a bit of cheese which I had brought with me, and we ate it thankfully. Seeing Mr. Simpson beginning to relapse into distrust, the following conversation as nearly as I can remember, took place between us. He began by remarking, that it was a mysterious Providence that he had been less prosperous since he had been less attached to the world, and that his endeavours had not been followed by that success which usually attends industry. I took the liberty to reply: 'Your heavenly Father sees on which side your danger lies, and is mercifully bringing you, by these disappointments, to trust less in the world and more in himself. My dear Mr. Simpson,' added I, 'we trust every body but God. As children we obey our parents implicitly, because we are taught to believe all is for our good which they command or forbid. If we undertake a voyage, we trust entirely to the skill and conduct of the pilot; we never torment ourselves in thinking he will carry us east, when he has promised to carry us west. If a dear and tried friend makes us a promise, we depend on him for the performance, and do not wound his feelings by our suspicions. When you used to go your annual journey to London, in the mail coach, you confided yourself to the care of the coachman, that he would carry you where he had engaged to do so; you were not anxiously watching him, and distrusting and inquiring at every turning. When the doctor sends home your medicine, don't you so fully trust in his ability and good will, that you swallow it down in full confidence? You never think of inquiring what are the ingredients, why they are mixed in that particular way, why there is more of one and less of another, and why they are bitter instead of sweet! If one dose does not cure you, he orders another, and changes the medicine when he sees the first does you no good, or that by long use the same medicine has lost its effect; if the weaker fails he prescribes a stronger: you swallow all, you submit to all, never questioning the skill or the kindness of the physician. God is the only being whom we do not trust, though He is the only one who is fully competent, both in will and power, to fulfil all his promises; and who has solemnly and repeatedly pledged himself to fulfil them in those Scriptures which we receive as his revealed will.''

* See John, chap. ii.—and John, chap. iv.

'Mr. Simpson thanked me for my little sermon, as he called it; but said at the same time, that what made my exhortations produce a powerful effect on his mind was, the patient cheerfulness with which he was pleased to say I bore my share in our misfortunes. A submissive behaviour, he said, was the best practical illustration of a real faith. When he had thanked God for our supper, we prayed together; after which we read the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. When my husband had finished it, he said, 'Surely if God's chief favourites have been martyrs, is not that a sufficient proof that this world is not a place of happiness, no earthly prosperity the reward of virtue. Shall we after reading this chapter, complain of our petty trials? Shall we not rather be thankful that our affliction is so light?'

'Next day Mr. Simpson walked out in search of some employment, by which we might be supported. He got a recommendation to Mr. Thomas, an opulent farmer and factor, who had large concerns, and wanted a skilful person to assist him in keeping his accounts. This we thought a fortunate circumstance; for we found that the salary would serve to procure us at least all the necessaries of life. The farmer was so pleased with Mr. Simpson's quickness, regularity, and good sense, that he offered us, of his own accord, a little neat cottage of his own, which then happened to be vacant, and told us we should live rent free, and promised to be a friend to us.'—'All *does* seem for the best now, indeed;' interrupted Mrs. Betty.—'We shall see,' said Mrs. Simpson, and thus went on.

'I now became very easy and very happy; and was cheerfully employed in putting our few things in order, and making every thing look to the best advantage. My husband, who wrote all the day for his employer, in the evening assisted me in doing up our little garden. This was a source of much pleasure to us; we both loved a garden, and we were not only contented but cheerful. Our employer had been absent some weeks on his annual journey. He came home on a Saturday night, and the next morning sent for Mr. Simpson to come and settle his accounts, which were got behind-hand by his

long absence. We were just going to church, and Mr. Simpson sent back word, that he would call and speak to him on his way home. A second message followed, ordering him to come to the farmer's directly: he agreed that he would walk round that way, and that my husband should call and excuse his attendance.

'The farmer more ignorant and worse educated than his ploughman, with all that pride and haughtiness which the possession of wealth, without knowledge or religion is apt to give, rudely asked my husband what he meant by sending him word that he would not come to him till the next day; and insisted that he should stay and settle the accounts then.—' Sir,' said my husband, in a very respectful manner, 'I am on my road to church, and I am afraid shall be too late.'—' Are you so,' said the farmer! 'Do you know who sent for you? You may, however, go to church, if you will, so you make haste back; and, d'ye hear, you may leave your accounts with me, as I conclude you have brought them with you; I will look them over by the time you return, and then you and I can do all I want to have done to-day in about a couple of hours, and I *will* give you home some letters to copy for me in the evening.' —' Sir,' answered my husband, 'I dare not obey you; it is Sunday.'—' And so you refuse to settle my accounts only because it is Sunday.' 'Sir,' replied Mr. Simpson, 'if you would give me a handful of silver and gold I dare not break the commandment of my God.'—' Well,' said the farmer, 'but this is not breaking the commandment; I don't order you to drive my cattle, or to work in my garden, or to do any thing which you might fancy would be a bad example,'—' Sir,' replied my husband, 'the example indeed goes a great way, but it is not the first object. The deed is wrong in itself.'—' Well, but I shall not keep you from church; and when you have been there, there is no harm in doing a little business, or taking a little pleasure the rest of the day.'—' Sir,' answered my husband, 'the commandment does not say, thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath *morning*, but the Sabbath *day*.' 'Get out of my house, you puritanical rascal, and out of my cottage too,' said the farmer; 'for if you refuse to do my work, I am not bound to keep my engagement with you; as you will not obey me as a master, I shall not pay you as a servant.'—' Sir,' said Mr. Simpson, 'I would gladly obey you, but I have a master in heaven whom I dare not disobey.'—' Then let him find employment for you,' said the enraged farmer; 'for I fancy you will get but poor employment on earth with these scrupulous notions, and so send home my papers, directly, and pack off out the parish.' —' Out of your cottage,' said my husband, 'I certainly will; but as to the parish, I hope I may remain in that, if I can find employment.' —' I will make it too hot to hold you,' replied the farmer, 'so you had better troop off bag and baggage: for I am overseer, and as you are sickly, it is my duty not to let any vagabonds stay in the parish who are likely to become chargeable.'

'By the time my husband returned home, for he found it too late to go to church, I had got our little dinner ready; it was a better one than we had for a long while been accustomed to see, and I was unusually cheerful at this improvement in our circumstances. I saw his eyes full of tears, and oh! with what pain did he bring himself to tell me that it was the last dinner we must ever eat in this house. I took his hand with a smile, and only said, 'The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord.'—' Notwithstanding this sudden stroke of injustice,' said my husband, 'this is still a happy country. Our employer, it is true, may turn us out at a moment's notice, because it is his own, but he has no further power over us; he cannot confine or punish us. His riches, it is true, give him power to insult, but not to oppress us. The same laws to which the affluent resort, protect *us* also. And as to our being driven out from a cottage, how many persons of the highest rank have lately been driven out from their palaces and castles; persons too, born in a station which he never enjoyed, and used to all the indulgences of that rank and wealth we never knew, are at this moment wandering over the face of the earth, without a house or without bread; exiles and beggars; while we, blessed be God, are in our own native land; we have still our liberty, our limbs, the protection of just and equal laws, our churches, our Bibles, and our Sabbaths.'

'This happy state of my husband's mind hushed my sorrows, and I never once murmured; nay, I sat down to dinner with a degree of cheerfulness, endeavouring to cast all our care on 'Him that careth for us.' We had begged to stay till the next morning, as Sunday was not the day on which we liked to remove; but we were ordered not to sleep another night in that house; so as we had little to carry, we marched off in the evening to the poor lodging we had before occupied. The thought that my husband had cheerfully renounced his little all for conscience sake, gave an unspeakable serenity to my mind; and I felt thankful that though cast down we were not forsaken: nay, I felt a lively gratitude to God, that while I doubted not he would accept this little sacrifice, as it was heartily made for his sake, he had graciously forborne to call us to greater trials.'

'And so you were turned adrift once more? Well, ma'am, saving your presence, I hope you won't be such a fool as to say all was for the best now.'—' Yes, Betty: He who does all things well, now made his kind Providence more manifest than ever. That very night, while we were sweetly sleeping in our poor lodging, the pretty cottage, out of which we were so unkindly driven, was burned to the ground by a flash of lightning which caught the thatch, and so completely consumed the whole little building that had it not been for the merciful Providence who thus overruled the cruelty of the farmer for the preservation of our lives, we must have been burned to ashes with the house. 'It was the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in our eyes.'—' O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness, and for all the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!'

'I will not tell you all the trials and afflic-

tions which befel us afterwards. I would also spare my heart the sad story of my husband's death.'—'Well, that was another blessing too, I suppose,' said Betty.—'Oh, it was the severest trial ever sent me!' replied Mrs. Simpson, a few tears quietly stealing down her face. 'I almost sunk under it. Nothing but the abundant grace of God could have carried me through such a visitation; and yet I now feel it to be the greatest mercy I ever experienced; he was my idol; no trouble ever came near my heart while he was with me. I got more credit than I deserved for my patience under trials, which were easily borne while he who shared and lightened them was spared to me. I had indeed prayed and struggled to be weaned from this world, but still my affection for him tied me down to the earth with a strong cord: and though I did earnestly try to keep my eyes fixed on the eternal world, yet I viewed it with too feeble a faith; I viewed it at too great a distance. I found it difficult to realize it—I had deceived myself. I had fancied that I bore my troubles so well from the pure love of God, but I have since found that my love for my husband had too great a share in reconciling me to every difficulty which I underwent for him. I lost him, the charm was broken, the cord which tied me down to earth was cut, this world had nothing left to engage me. Heaven had now no rival in my heart. Though my love of God had always been sincere, yet I found there wanted this blow to make it perfect. But though all that had made life pleasant to me was gone, I did not sink as those who have no hope. I prayed that I might still, in this trying conflict, be enabled to adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour.

'After many more hardships, I was at length so happy as to get an asylum in this alms-house. Here my cares are at an end, but not my duties.'—'Now you are wrong again, interrupted Mrs. Betty, 'your duty is now to take care of yourself: for I am sure you have nothing to spare.'—'There *you* are mistaken again,' said Mrs. Simpson. 'People are so apt to fancy that money is all in all, that all the other gifts of providence are overlooked as things of no value. I have here a great deal of leisure; a good part of this I devote to the wants of those who are more distressed than myself. I work a little for the old, and I instruct the young. My eyes are good; this enables me to read the Bible either to those whose sight is decayed, or who were never taught to read. I have tolerable health; so that I am able occasionally to sit up with the sick; in the intervals of nursing, I can pray with them. In my younger days I thought it not much to sit up late for my pleasure; shall I now think much of sitting up now and then to watch by a dying bed? My Saviour waked and watched for me in the garden and on the mount; and shall I do nothing for his suffering members? It is only by keeping his sufferings in view that we can truly practise charity to others, or exercise self-denial to ourselves.'

'Well,' said Mrs. Betty, 'I think if I had lived in such genteel life as you have done, I could never be reconciled to an alms-house; and I am afraid I should never forgive any of those who were the cause of sending me there, particularly that farmer Thomas who turned you out of doors.'

'Betty,' said Mrs. Simpson, 'I not only forgive him heartily, but I remember him in my prayers, as one of those instruments with which it has pleased God to work for my good. Oh! never put off forgiveness to a dying bed! When people come to die, we often see how the conscience is troubled with sins, of which before they hardly felt the existence. How ready are they to make restitution of ill-gotten gain; and this perhaps for two reasons; from a feeling conviction that it can be of no use to them where they are going, as well as from a near view of their own responsibility. We also hear from the most hardened, of death-bed forgiveness of enemies. Even malefactors at Tyburn forgive. But why must we wait for a dying bed to do what ought to be done now? Believe me, that scene will be so full of terror and amazement to the soul, that we had not need load it with unnecessary business.'

Just as Mrs. Simpson was saying these words, a letter was brought her from the minister of the parish where the farmer lived, by whom Mr. Simpson had been turned out of his cottage. The letter was as follows:—

'MADAM—I write to tell you that your old oppressor, Mr. Thomas, is dead. I attended him in his last moments. O, may my latter end never be like his! I shall not soon forget his despair at the approach of death. His riches, which had been his sole joy, now doubled his sorrows; for he was going where they could be of no use to him; and he found too late that he had laid up no treasure in heaven. He felt great concern at his past life, but for nothing more than his unkindness to Mr. Simpson. He charged me to find you out, and let you know that by his will he bequeathed you five hundred pounds as some compensation. He died in great agonies; declaring with his last breath, that if he could live his life over again, he would serve God, and strictly observe the Sabbath.

'Yours, &c.

'J. JOHNSON.'

Mrs. Betty, who had listened attentively to the letter, jumped up, clapped her hands, and cried out, 'Now all *is for* the best, and I shall see you a lady once more.'—'I am, indeed, thankful for this money,' said Mrs. Simpson, 'and am glad that riches were not sent me till I had learned, as I humbly hope, to make a right use of them. But come, let us go in, for I am very cold, and find I have sat too long in the night air.'

Betty was now ready enough to acknowledge the hand of Providence in this prosperous event, though she was blind to it when the dispensation was more dark. Next morning she went early to visit Mrs. Simpson, but not seeing her below, she went up stairs, where, to her great sorrow, she found her confined to her bed by a fever, caught the night before by sitting so late on the bench reading the letter and talking it over. Betty was now more ready to cry out against Providence than ever. 'What! to catch

a fever while you were reading that very letter which told you about your good fortune; which would have enabled you to live like a lady as you are. I never will believe this is for the best; to be deprived of life just as you were beginning to enjoy it!'

'Betty,' said Mrs. Simpson, 'we must learn not to rate health nor life itself too highly. There is little in life, for its own sake, to be so fond of. As a good archbishop used to say, 'tis but the same thing over again, or probably worse: so many more nights and days, summers and winters; a repetition of the same pleasures, but with less relish for them; a return of the same or greater pains, but with less strength, and perhaps less patience to bear them.'—'Well,' replied Betty, 'I did think that Providence was at last giving you your reward.'—'Reward!' cried Mrs. Simpson. 'O, no! my merciful Father will not put me off with so poor a portion as wealth; I feel I shall die.'—'It is very hard, indeed,' said Betty, 'so good as you are, to be taken off just as your prosperity was beginning.—'You think I am good just now,' said Mrs. Simpson, 'because I am prosperous. Success is no sure mark of God's favour; at this rate, you, who judge by outward things, would have thought Herod a better man than John the Baptist; and if I may be allowed to say so, you, on your principles, that the sufferer is the sinner, would have believed Pontius Pilate higher in God's favour, than the Saviour whom he condemned to die, for your sins and mine.'

In a few days Mrs. Betty found that her new friend was dying, and though she was struck at her resignation, she could not forbear murmuring that so good a woman should be taken away at the very instant which she came into possession of so much money. 'Betty,' said Mrs. Simpson in a feeble voice, 'I believe you love me dearly, you would do any thing to cure me; yet you do not love me so well as God loves me, though *you* would raise me up, and He is putting a period to my life. He has never sent me a single stroke which was not absolutely necessary for me. You, if you could restore me, might be laying me open to some temptation from which God, by removing, will deliver me. Your kindness in making this world so smooth for me, I might for ever have deplored in a world of misery. God's grace in afflicting me, will hereafter be the subject of my praises in a world of blessedness. Betty,' added the dying woman, 'do you really think that I am going to a place of rest and joy eternal?'—'To be sure I do,' said Betty.—'Do you firmly believe that I am going to the assembly of the first-born; to the spirits of just men made perfect, to God the judge of all; and to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant?'—'I am sure you are,' said Betty.—'And yet,' resumed she, 'you would detain me from all this happiness; and you think my merciful Father is using me unkindly by removing me from a world of sin, and sorrow, and temptation, to such joys as have not entered into the heart of man to conceive; while it would have better suited your notions of reward to defer my entrance into the blessedness of heaven, that I might have enjoyed a legacy of a few hundred pounds! Believe my dying words—ALL IS FOR THE BEST.'

Mrs. Simpson expired soon after, in a frame of mind which convinced her new friend, that 'God's ways are not as our ways.'

A CURE FOR MELANCHOLY.*

SHOWING THE WAY TO DO MUCH GOOD WITH LITTLE MONEY.

Mrs. Jones was the widow of a great merchant. She was liberal to the poor, as far as giving them money went; but as she was too much taken up with the world, she did not spare so much of her time and thoughts about doing good as she ought; so that her money was often ill bestowed. In the late troubles, Mr. Jones, who had lived in an expensive manner, failed; and he took his misfortunes so much to heart, that he fell sick and died. Mrs. Jones retired, on a very narrow income, to the small village of Weston, where she seldom went out, except to church. Though a pious woman, she was too apt to indulge her sorrow; and though she did not neglect to read and pray, yet she gave up a great part of her time to melancholy thoughts, and grew quite inactive. She well knew how sinful it would be for her to seek a remedy for her grief in worldly pleasures, which is a way many people take to cure afflictions; but she was not aware how wrong it was to weep away that time which might have been better spent in drying the tears of others.

It was happy for her, that Mr. Simpson, the vicar of Weston, was a pious man. One Sunday he happened to preach on the good Samaritan. It was a charity sermon, and there was a collection at the door. He called on Mrs. Jones after church, and found her in tears. She told him she had been much moved by his discourse, and she wept because she had so little to give to the plate, for though she felt very keenly for the poor in these dear times, yet she could not assist them. 'Indeed, sir,' added she, 'I never so much regretted the loss of my fortune as this afternoon, when you bade us *go and do likewise*.' —'You do not,' replied Mr. Simpson, 'enter into the spirit of our Saviour's parable, if you think you cannot *go and do likewise* without being rich. In the case of the Samaritan, you may observe, that charity was bestowed more by kindness, and care, and medicine, than by money. You, madam, were as much concerned in the duties inculcated in my sermon as sir John with his great estate; and, to speak plainly, I have been sometimes surprised that you should not put yourself in the way of being more useful.'

* This was first printed under the title of The Cottage Cook.

'Sir,' said Mrs. Jones, 'I am grown shy of the poor since I have nothing to give them.' 'Nothing! madam?' replied the clergyman: 'Do you call your time, your talents, your kind offices, nothing? Doing good does not so much depend on the riches as on the heart and the will. The servant who improved his two talents was equally commended by his Lord with him who had ten: and it was not poverty, but selfish indolence, which drew down so severe a condemnation on him who had only one. It is by our conformity to Christ, that we must prove ourselves Christians. You, madam, are not called upon to work miracles, nor to preach the Gospel, yet you may in your measure and degree, resemble your Saviour *by going about and doing good.* A plain Christian, who has sense and leisure, by his pious exertions and prudent zeal, may, in a subordinate way, be helping on the cause of religion, as well as of charity, and greatly promote, by his exertions and example, the labours of the parish minister. The generality, it is true, have but an under part to act; but to all God assigns some part, and he will require of all whose lot is not very laborious, that they not only *work out their own salvation*, but that they promote the cause of religion, and the comfort and salvation of others.

To those who would undervalue works of mercy as evidences of piety, I would suggest a serious attention to the solemn appeal which the Saviour of the world makes, in that awful representation of the day of judgment, contained in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, both to those who have neglected, and to those who have performed such works; performed them, I mean, on right principles. With what a gracious condescension does he promise to accept the smallest kindness done to his suffering members for his sake. You, madam, I will venture to say, might do more good than the richest man in the parish could do by merely giving his money. Instead of sitting here, brooding over your misfortunes, which are past remedy, bestir yourself to find out ways of doing much good with little money; or even without any money at all. You have lately studied economy for yourself; instruct your poor neighbours in that important art. They want it almost as much as they want money. You have influence with the few rich persons in the parish; exert that influence. Betty, my house-keeper, shall assist you in any thing in which she can be useful. Try this for one year, and if you then tell me that you should have better shown your love to God and man, and been a happier woman, had you continued gloomy and inactive, I shall be much surprised, and shall consent to your resuming your present way of life.'

The sermon and this discourse together made so deep an impression on Mrs. Jones, that she formed a new plan of life, and set about it at once, as every body does who is in earnest. Her chief aim was the happiness of her poor neighbours in the next world; but she was also very desirous to promote their present comfort: and indeed the kindness she showed to their bodily wants gave her such an access to their houses and hearts, as made them better disposed to receive religious counsel and instruction.—Mrs. Jones was much respected by all the rich persons in Weston, who had known her in her prosperity. Sir John was thoughtless, lavish, and indolent. The Squire was over frugal, but active, sober, and not ill-natured. Sir John loved pleasure, the squire loved money. Sir John was one of those popular sort of people who get much praise, and yet do little good; who subscribe with equal readiness to a cricket match or a charity school; who take it for granted that the poor are to be indulged with bell-ringing and bonfires, and to be made drunk at Christmas; this Sir John called being kind to them; but he thought it was folly to teach them, and madness to think of reforming them. He was, however, always ready to give his guinea; but I question whether he would have given up his hunting and his gaming to have cured every grievance in the land. He had that sort of constitutional good nature which, if he had lived much within sight of misery, would have led him to be liberal: but he had that selfish love of ease, which prompted him to give to undeserving objects, rather than be at the pains to search out the deserving. He neither discriminated between the degrees of distress, nor the characters of the distressed.—His idea of charity was, that a rich man should occasionally give a little of his superfluous wealth to the first object that occurred; but he had no conception that it was his duty so to husband his wealth, and limit his expenses, as to supply a regular fund for established charity. And the utmost stretch of his benevolence never led him to suspect that he was called to abridge himself in the most idle article of indulgence, for a purpose foreign to his own personal enjoyment. On the other hand, the squire would assist Mrs. Jones in any of her plans if it cost him nothing; so she showed her good sense by never asking sir John for advice, or the squire for subscriptions, and by this prudence gained the full support of both.

Mrs. Jones resolved to spend two or three days in a week in getting acquainted with the state of the parish, and she took care never to walk out without a few little good books in her pocket to give away. This, though a cheap, is a most important act of charity: it has its various uses; it furnishes the poor with religious knowledge, which they have so few ways of obtaining; it counteracts the wicked designs of those who have taught us at least one lesson, by their zeal in the dispersion of *wicked* books—I mean the lesson of vigilance and activity; and it is the best introduction for any useful conversation which the giver of the book may wish to introduce.

She found that among the numerous wants she met with, no small share was owing to bad management, or to imposition: she was struck with the small size of the loaves.—Wheat was now not very dear, and she was sure a good deal of blame rested with the baker. She sent for a shilling loaf to the next great town, where the mayor often sent to the bakers' shops to see that the bread was proper weight. She weighed her town loaf against her country loaf, and found the latter two pounds lighter than it ought to be. This was not the sort of grievance to carry to sir John; but luckily the squire was also a ma-

gistrate, and it was quite in his way: for though he would not give, yet he would counsel, calculate, contrive, reprimand, and punish. He told her he could remedy the evil if some one would lodge an information against the baker; but that there was no act of justice which he found it so difficult to accomplish.

The Informer.

She dropped in on the blacksmith. He was at dinner. She inquired if his bread was good. 'Ay, good enough, mistress; for you see it is as white as your cap, if we had but more of it. Here's a sixpenny loaf; you might take it for a penny roll!' He then heartily cursed Crib the baker, and said he ought to be hanged. Mrs. Jones now told him what she had done; how she had detected the fraud, and assured him the evil should be redressed on the morrow, provided he would appear and inform. 'I inform,' said he, with a shocking oath, 'hang an informer! I scorn the office.'—'You are nice in the wrong place,' replied Mrs. Jones; 'for you don't scorn to abuse the baker, nor to be in a passion, nor to swear, though you scorn to redress a public injury, and to increase your children's bread. Let me tell you, there is nothing in which you ignorant people mistake more than in your notions about *informers*. Informing is a lawful way of obtaining redress; and though it is a mischievous and a hateful thing to go to a justice about every trifling matter, yet laying an information on important occasions, without malice, or bitterness of any kind, is what no honest man ought to be ashamed of. The shame is to commit the offence, not to inform against it. I, for my part, should perhaps do right, if I not only informed against Crib, for making light bread, but against you, for swearing at him.'

'Well, but madam,' said the smith, a little softened, 'don't you think it a sin and a shame to turn informer?' 'So far from it, that when a man's motives are good,' said Mrs. Jones, 'and in clear cases as the present, I think it a duty and a virtue. If it is right that there should be laws, it must be right that they should be put in execution; but how can this be, if people will not inform the magistrates when they see the laws broken! I hope I shall always be afraid to be an offender against the laws, but not to be an informer in support of them.—*An informer by trade* is commonly a knave. A rash, malicious, or passionate informer is a firebrand; but honest and prudent informers are almost as useful members of society as the judges of the land. If you continue in your present mind on this subject, do not you think that you will be answerable for the crimes you might have prevented by informing, and thus become a sort of accomplice of the villains who commit them.

'Well, madam,' said the smith, 'I now see plainly enough that there is no shame in turning informer when my cause is good.'—'And your *motive right;* always mind that, said Mrs. Jones. Next day the smith attended, Crib was fined in the usual penalty, his light bread was taken from him and given to the poor. The justices resolved henceforward to inspect the bakers in their district; and all of them, except Crib, and such as Crib, were glad of it; for honesty never dreads a trial. Thus had Mrs. Jones the comfort of seeing how useful people may be without expense; for if she could have given the poor fifty pounds, she would not have done them so great, or so lasting a benefit, as she did them in seeing their loaves restored to their lawful weight: and the true light in which she had put the business of *informing* was of no small use, in giving the neighbourhood right views on that subject.

There were two shops in the parish; but Mrs. Sparks, at the Cross, had not half so much custom as Wills, at the Sugarloaf, though she sold her goods a penny in a shilling cheaper, and all agreed that they were much better. Mrs. Jones asked Mrs. Sparks the reason. 'Madam,' said the shopkeeper, 'Mr. Wills will give longer trust. Besides this, his wife keeps shop on a Sunday morning while I am at church. Mrs. Jones now reminded Mr. Simpson to read the king's proclamation against vice and immorality next Sunday at church; and prevailed on the squire to fine any one who should keep open shop on a Sunday. This he readily undertook. for while sir John thought it *good-natured* to connive at breaking the laws, the squire fell into the other extreme, of thinking that the zealous enforcing of penal statutes would stand in the stead of all religious restraints. Mrs. Jones proceeded to put the people in mind that a shopkeeper who would sell on a Sunday, would be more likely to cheat them all the week, than one who went to church.

She also laboured hard to convince them how much they would lessen their distress, if they would contrive to deal with Mrs. Sparks for ready money, rather than with Wills on long credit; those who listened to her found their circumstances far more comfortable at the year's end, while the rest tempted, like some of their betters, by the pleasure of putting off the evil day of payment, like them; at last found themselves plunged in debt and distress. She took care to make a good use of such instances in her conversation with the poor, and, by perseverance, she at length brought them so much to her way of thinking, that Wills found it to be his interest to alter his plan, and sell his goods on as good terms, and as short credit, as Mrs. Sparks sold hers. This completed Mrs. Jones's success; and she had the satisfaction of having put a stop to three or four great evils in the parish of Weston, without spending a shilling in doing it.

Patty Smart and Jenny Rose were thought to be the two best managers in the parish. They both told Mrs. Jones, that the poor would get the coarse pieces of meat cheaper, if the gentle folks did not buy them for soups and gravy. Mrs. Jones thought there was reason in this: so away she went to sir John, the squire, the surgeon, the attorney, and the steward, the only persons in the parish who could afford to buy these costly things. She told them, that if they would all be so good as to buy only prime pieces, which they could very well afford, the coarse and cheap joints would come more within the reach of the poor. Most of the gentry readily consented. Sir John cared not what his meat cost him, but told Mrs. Jones, in his gay way, that he would eat any thing, or give any thing, so that she would not tease him with long stories

about the poor. The squire said he should prefer vegetable soups, because they were cheaper, and the doctor preferred them because they were wholesomer. The steward chose to imitate the squire; and the attorney found it would be quite ungenteel to stand out. So gravy soups became very unfashionable in the parish of Weston; and I am sure if rich people did but think a little on this subject, they would become as unfashionable in many other places.

When wheat grew cheaper, Mrs. Jones was earnest with the poor woman to bake large brown loaves at home, instead of buying small white ones at the shop. Mrs. Betty had told her, that baking at home would be one step towards restoring the good old management. Only Betty Smart and Jenny Rose baked at home in the whole parish; and who lived so well as they did? Yet the general objection seemed reasonable. They could not bake without yeast, which often could not be had, as no one brewed except the great folks and the public houses. Mrs. Jones found, however, that Patty and Jenny contrived to brew as well as to bake. She sent for these women; knowing that from them she could get truth and reason. 'How comes it,' said she to them, 'that you two are the only poor women in the parish who can afford to brew a small cask of beer? Your husbands have no better wages than other men.'—'True, madam,' said Patty, 'but they never set foot in a public house. I will tell you the truth. When I first married, our John went to the Checquers every night, and I had my tea and fresh butter twice a-day at home. This slop, which consumed a deal of sugar, began to *rake* my stomach sadly, as I had neither meat nor milk: at last (I am ashamed to own it) I began to take a drop of gin to quiet the pain, till in time I looked for my gin as regularly as for my tea. At last the gin, the ale-house, and the tea began to make us both sick and poor, and I had like to have died with my first child. Parson Simpson then talked so finely to us on the subject of improper indulgences, that we resolved, by the grace of God, to turn over a new leaf, and I promised John, if he would give up the Checquers, I would break the gin bottle, and never drink tea in the afternoon, except on Sundays, when he was at home to drink it with me. We have kept our word, and both our eating and drinking, our health and our consciences are better for it. Though meat is sadly dear, we can buy two pounds of fresh meat for less than one pound of fresh butter, and it gives five times the nourishment. And dear as malt is, I contrive to keep a drop of drink in the house for John, and John will make me drink half a pint with him every evening, and a pint a-day when I am a nurse.

Public Houses.

As one good deed, as well as one bad one, brings on another, this conversation set Mrs. Jones on inquiring why so many ale-houses were allowed. She did not choose to talk to sir John on this subject, who would only have said, 'let them enjoy themselves, poor fellows: if they get drunk now and then, they work hard.' But those who have this false good-nature forget, that while the man is *enjoying himself*, as it is called, his wife and children are ragged and starving. True Christian good-nature never indulges one at the cost of many, but is kind to all. The squire, who was a friend to order, took up the matter. He consulted Mr. Simpson. 'The Lion,' said he, 'is necessary. It stands by the road-side; travellers must have a resting place. As to the Checquers and the Bell, they do no good but much harm.' Mr. Simpson had before made many attempts to get the Checquers put down; but, unluckily, it was sir John's own house, and kept by his late butler. Not that sir John valued the rent; but he had a false kindness, which made him support the cause of an old servant, though he knew he was a bad man, and kept a disorderly house. The squire, however, now took away the license from the Bell. And a fray happening soon after at the Chequers (which was near the church) in time of Divine service, sir John was obliged to suffer the house to be put down as a nuisance. You would not believe how many poor families were able to brew a little cask, when the temptation of those ale-houses was taken out of their way. Mrs. Jones, in her evening walks, had the pleasure to see many an honest man drinking his wholesome cup of beer by his own fire-side, his rosy children playing about his knees, his clean cheerful wife singing her youngest baby to sleep, rocking the cradle with her foot, while with her hands she was making a dumpling for her kind husband's supper. Some few, I am sorry to say, though I don't chuse to name names, still preferred getting drunk once a week at the Lion, and drinking water at other times.—Thus Mrs. Jones, by a little exertion and perseverance, added to the temporal comforts of a whole parish, and diminished its immorality and extravagance in the same proportion.

The good women being now supplied with yeast from each other's brewings, would have baked; but two difficulties still remained. Many of them had no ovens; for since the new bad management had crept in, many cottages have been built without this convenience. Fuel also was scarce at Weston. Mrs. Jones advised the building a large parish oven. Sir John subscribed to be rid of her importunity, and the squire, because he thought every improvement in economy would reduce the poor's rate. It was soon accomplished: and to this oven, at a certain hour, three times a week, the elder children carried their loaves which their mothers had made at home, and paid a half-penny, or a penny according to their size, for the baking.

Mrs. Jones found that no poor women in Weston could buy a little milk, as the farmers' wives did not care to rob their dairies. This was a great distress, especially when the children were sick. So Mrs. Jones advised Mrs. Sparks, at the Cross, to keep a couple of cows, and sell out the milk by halfpennyworths. She did so, and found, that though this plan gave her some additional trouble, she got full as much by it as if she had made cheese and butter. She also sold rice at a cheap rate; so that, with the help of the milk and the public oven, a fine rice pudding was to be had for a trifle.

Charity Schools for Servants.

The girls' school, in the parish, was fallen into neglect; for though many would be subscribers, yet no one would look after it. I wish this was the case at Weston only: many schools have come to nothing, and many parishes are quite destitute of schools, because too many gentry neglect to make it a part of the duty of their grown up daughters to inspect the instruction of the poor. It was not in Mr. Simpson's way to see if girls were taught to work. The best clergyman cannot do every thing. This is ladies business. Mrs. Jones consulted her counsellors, Mrs. Betty, and they went every Friday to the school, where they invited mothers, as well as daughters, to come, and learn to cut out to the best advantage. Mrs. Jones had not been bred to these things; but by means of Mrs. Cowper's excellent cuttingout-book; she soon became mistress of the whole art. She not only had the girls taught to make and mend, but to wash and iron too. She also allowed the mother or eldest daughter of every family to come once a week, and learn how to dress *one cheap dish.* One Friday, which was cooking day, who should pass by but the squire, with his gun and dogs. He looked into the school for the first time. 'Well, madam,' said he, 'what good are you doing here? What are your girls learning and earning? Where are your manufactures? Where is your spinning and your carding?'—'Sir,' said she, 'this is a small parish, and you know ours is not a manufacturing country; so that when these girls are women, they will not be much employed in spinning. We must, in the kind of good we attempt to do, consult the local genius of the place: I do not think it will answer to introduce spinning, for instance, in a country where it is quite new. However, we teach them a little of it, and still more of knitting, that they may be able to get up a small piece of household linen once a year, and provide the family with the stockings, by employing the odds and ends of their time in these ways. But there is another manufacture, which I am carrying on, and I know of none within my own reach which is so valuable.'—'What can that be?' said the squire.—'*To make good wives for working men,*' said she. 'Is not mine an excellent staple commodity? I am teaching these girls the arts of industry and good management. It is little encouragement to an honest man to work hard all the week, if his wages are wasted by a slattern at home. Most of these girls will probably become wives to the poor, or servants to the rich; to such the common arts of life are of great value: now, as there is little opportunity for learning these at the school house, I intend to propose that such gentry as have sober servants, shall allow one of these girls to come and work in their families one day in a week, when the house-keeper, the cook, the house-maid, or the laundry-maid, shall be required to instruct them in their several departments. This I conceive to be the best way of training good servants. They should serve this kind of regular apprenticeship to various sorts of labour. Girls who come out of charity-schools, where they have been employed in knitting, sewing, and reading, are not sufficiently prepared for hard and laborious employments. I do not in general approve of teaching charity children to write for the same reason. I confine within very strict limits my plan of educating the poor. A thorough knowledge of religion, and of some of those coarser arts of life by which the community may be best benefitted, includes the whole stock of instruction, which, unless in very extraordinary cases, I would wish to bestow.'

'What have you got on the fire, madam?' said the squire; 'for your pot really smells as savoury as if Sir John's French cook had filled it.' 'Sir,' replied Mrs. Jones, 'I have lately got acquainted with Mrs. White, who has given us an account of her cheap dishes, and nice cookery, in one of the cheap Repository little books.* Mrs. Betty and I have made all her dishes, and very good they are; and we have got several others of our own. Every Friday we come here and dress one. These good women see how it is done, and learn to dress it at their own houses. I take home part for my own dinner, and what is left I give to each in turn. I hope I have opened their eyes on a sad mistake they had got into, *that we think any thing is good enough for the poor.* Now, I do *not* think any thing good enough for the poor which is not clean, wholesome, and palatable, and what I myself would not cheerfully eat, if my circumstances required it.'

'Pray, Mrs. Betty,' said the squire, 'oblige me with a basin of your soup.' The squire found it so good after his walk, that he was almost sorry he had promised to buy no more legs of beef, and declared, that not one sheep's head should ever go to his kennel again. He begged his cook might have the receipt, and Mrs. Jones wrote it out for her. She has also been so obliging as to favour me with a copy of all her receipts. And as I hate all monopoly, and see no reason why such cheap, nourishing, and savoury dishes should be confined to the parish of Weston, I print them, that all other parishes may have the same advantage. Not only the poor, but all persons with small incomes may be glad of them.

'Well, madam,' said Mr. Simpson, who came in soon after, 'which is best, to sit down and cry over our misfortunes, or to bestir ourselves to do our duty to the world?' 'Sir,' replied Mrs. Jones, 'I thank you for the useful lesson you have given me. You have taught me that an excessive indulgence of sorrow, is not piety, but selfishness; that the best remedy for our own afflictions is to lessen the afflictions of others, and thus evidence our submission to the will of God, who, perhaps, sent these very trials to abate our own self-love, and to stimulate our exertions for the good of others. You have taught me that our time and talents are to be employed with zeal in God's service, if we wish for his favour here or hereafter; and that one great employment of those talents which he requires, is the promotion of the present, and much more the future happiness of

* See the Way to Plenty, for a number of cheap receipts.

all around us.—You have taught me that much good may be done with little money; and that the heart, the head, and the hands are of some use, as well as the purse. I have also learned another lesson, which I hope not to forget, that Providence, in sending these extraordinary seasons of scarcity and distress, which we have lately twice experienced, has been pleased to overrule these trying events to the general good; for it has not only excited the rich to an increased liberality, as to actual contribution, but it has led them to get more acquainted with the local wants of their poorer brethren, and to interest themselves in their comfort; it has led to improved modes of economy, and to a more feeling kind of beneficence. Above all, without abating any thing of a just subordination, it has brought the affluent to a nearer knowledge of the persons and characters of their indigent neighbours; it has literally brought 'the rich and poor to meet together;' and this I look upon to be one of the essential advantages attending Sunday schools also, where they are carried on upon true principles, and are sanctioned by the visits as well as supported by the contributions of the wealthy.'

May all who read this account of Mrs. Jones, and who are under the same circumstances, *go and do likewise!*

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

I PROMISED, in the *Cure for Melancholy*, to give some account of the manner in which Mrs. Jones set up her school. She did not much fear being able to raise the money; but money is of little use, unless some persons of sense and piety can be found to direct these institutions. Not that I would discourage those who set them up, even in the most ordinary manner, and from mere views of worldly policy. It is something gained to rescue children from idling away their Sabbath in the fields or the streets. It is no small thing to keep them from those to which a day of leisure tempts the idle and the ignorant. It is something for them to be taught to read; it is much to be taught to read the Bible, and much, indeed, to be carried regularly to church. But all this is not enough. To bring these institutions to answer their highest end, can only be effected by God's blessing on the best directed means, the choice of able teachers, and a diligent attention in some pious gentry to visit and inspect the schools.

On Recommendations.

Mrs. Jones had one talent that eminently qualified her to do good, namely, judgment; this, even in the gay part of her life, had kept her from many mistakes; but though she had sometimes been deceived herself, she was very careful not to deceive others, by recommending people to fill any office for which they were unfit, either through selfishness or false kindness. She used to say there is always some one appropriate quality which every person must possess, in order to fit them for any particular employment—'Even in this quality,' said she to Mr. Simpson the clergyman, 'I do not expect perfection; but if they are destitute of this, whatever good qualities they may possess besides, though they may do for some other employment, they will not do for this. If I want a pair of shoes, I go to a shoemaker; I do not go to a man of another trade, however ingenious he may be, to ask him if he cannot *contrive* to make me a pair of shoes. When I lived in London, I learned to be much on my guard as to recommendations. I found people often wanted to impose on me some one who was a burthen to themselves.—Once, I remember, when I undertook to get a matron for an hospital, half my acquaintance had some one to offer me. Mrs. Gibson sent me an old cook, whom she herself had discharged for wasting her own provisions, yet she had the conscience to recommend this woman to take care of the provisions of a large community. Mrs. Grey sent me a discarded housekeeper, whose constitution had been ruined by sitting up with Mrs. Grey's gouty husband; but who she yet thought might do well enough to undergo the fatigue of taking care of an hundred poor sick people. A third friend sent me a woman who had no merit but that of being very poor, and it would be charity to provide for her. The truth is, the lady was obliged to allow her a small pension till she could get her off her own hands, by turning her on those of others.'

'It is very true, madam,' said Mr. Simpson, 'the right way is always to prefer the good of the many to the good of one; if, indeed, it can be called doing good to any one to place them in a station in which they must feel unhappy, by not knowing how to discharge the duties of it. I will tell you how I manage. If the persons recommended are objects of charity, I privately subscribe to their wants; I pity and help them, but I never promote them to a station for which they are unfit, as I should by so doing hurt a whole community to help a distressed individual.'

Thus Mrs. Jones resolved that the first step towards setting up her school should be to provide a suitable mistress. The vestry were so earnest in recommending one woman, that she thought it worth looking into. On inquiry, she found it was a scheme to take a large family off the parish; they never considered that a very ignorant woman, with a family of young children, was, of all others, the most unfit for a school; all they considered was, that the profits of the school might enable her to live without parish pay. Mrs. Jones refused another, though she could read well, and was decent in her conduct, because she used to send her children to the shop on Sundays. And she objected to a third, a very sensible woman, because she was suspected of making an outward profession of religion a cloak for immoral conduct. Mrs. Jones knew she must not be too nice neither; she knew she must put up with many faults at

last. 'I knew,' said she to Mr. Simpson, 'the imperfection of every thing that is human. As the mistress will have much to bear with from the children, so I expect to have something to bear with in the mistress; and she and I must submit to our respective trials, by thinking how much God has to bear with in us all. But there are certain qualities which are indispensable in certain situations. There are, in particular, three things which a school-mistress must not be without, *good sense*, *activity*, and *piety*. Without the first she will mislead others; without the second she will neglect them; and without the third, though she may civilize, yet she will never christianize them.'

Mr. Simpson said, 'he really knew but of one person in the parish who was fully likely to answer her purpose: this,' continued he, 'is no other than my housekeeper, Mrs. Betty Crew. It will indeed be a great loss to me to part from her; and to her it will be a far more fatiguing life than that which she at present leads. But ought I to put my own personal comfort, or ought Betty to put her own ease and quiet, in competition with the good of above an hundred children? This will appear still more important, if we consider the good done by these institutions, not as *fruit*, but *seed;* if we take into the account how many yet unborn may become Christians, in consequence of our making these children Christians: for how can we calculate the number which may be hereafter trained for Heaven, by those very children we are going to teach, when they themselves shall become parents, and you and I are dead and forgotten? To be sure, by parting from Betty, my peas-soup will not be quite so well flavoured, nor my linen so neatly got up; but the day is fast approaching, when all this will signify but little; but it will not signify little whether one hundred immortal souls were the better for my making this petty sacrifice. Mrs. Crew is a real Christian, has excellent sense, and had a good education from my mother. She has also had a little sort of preparatory training for the business; for when the poor children come to the parsonage for broth on a Saturday evening, she is used to appoint them all to come at the same time; and after she has filled their pitchers, she ranges them round her in the garden, and examines them in their catechism. She is just and fair in dealing out the broth and beef, not making my favour to the parents depend on the skill of their children: but her own old caps and ribands, and cast-off clothes, are bestowed as little rewards on the best scholars. So that taking the time she spends in working for them, and the things she gives them, there is many a lady who does not exceed Mrs. Crew in acts of charity. This I mention to confirm your notion, that it is not necessary to be rich in order to do good; a religious upper servant has great opportunities of this sort, if the master is disposed to encourage her.'

My readers, I trust, need not be informed, that this is that very Mrs. Betty Crew who assisted Mrs. Jones in teaching poor women to cut out linen and dress cheap dishes, as related in the *Cure for Melancholy*. Mrs. Jones, in the following week, got together as many of the mothers as she could, and spoke to them as follows:

Mrs. Jones's Exhortation.

'My good women, on Sunday next I propose to open a school for the instruction of your children. Those among you, who know what it is to be able to read your Bible, will, I doubt not, rejoice that the same blessing is held out to your children. You who are *not* able yourselves to read what your Saviour has done and suffered for you, ought to be doubly anxious that your children should reap a blessing which you have lost. Would not that mother be thought an unnatural monster who should stand by and snatch out of her child's mouth the bread which a kind friend has just put into it? But such a mother would be merciful, compared with her who should rob her children of the opportunity of learning to read the word of God when it is held out to them. Remember, that if you slight the present offer, or if, after having sent your children a few times you should afterwards keep them at home under vain pretences, you will have to answer for it at the day of judgment. Let not your poor children, *then*, have cause to say, 'My fond mother was my worst enemy. I might have been bred up in the fear of the Lord, and she opposed it for the sake of giving me a little paltry pleasure.—For an idle holiday, I am now brought to the gates of hell!' My dear women, which of you could bear to see your darling child condemned to everlasting destruction?—Which of you could bear to hear him accuse you as the cause of it? Is there any mother here present, who will venture to say—'I will doom the child I bore to sin and hell, rather than put them or myself to a little present pain, by curtailing their evil inclinations! I will let them spend the Sabbath in ignorance and idleness, instead of rescuing them from vanity and sin, by sending them to school!' If there are any such here present, let that mother who values her child's pleasure more than his soul, now walk away, while I set down in my list the names of all those who wish to bring their young ones up in the way that leads to eternal life, instead of indulging them in the pleasures of sin, which are but for a moment.'

When Mrs. Jones had done speaking, most of the women thanked her for her good advice, and hoped that God would give them grace to follow it; promising to send their children constantly. Others, who were not so well-disposed, were yet afraid to refuse, after the sin of so doing had been so plainly set before them. The worst of the women had kept away from this meeting, resolving to set their faces against the school. Most of those also who were present, as soon as they got home, set about providing their children with what little decent apparel they could raise. Many a willing mother lent her tall daughter her hat, best cap, and white handkerchief; and many a grateful father spared his linen waistcoat and bettermost hat, to induce his grown up son to attend; for it is a rule with which Mrs. Jones began, that she would not receive the younger children out of any family who did not send their elder ones. Too many made excuses that their shoes were old,

or their hat worn out. But Mrs. Jones told them not to bring any excuse to her which they could not bring to the day of judgment; and among those excuses she would hardly admit any except accidents, sickness or attendance on sick parents or young children.

Subscriptions.

Mrs. Jones, who had secured large subscriptions from the gentry, was desirous of getting the help and countenance of the farmers and trades-people, whose duty and interest she thought it was to support a plan calculated to improve the virtue and happiness of the parish. Most of them subscribed, and promised to see that their workmen sent their children. She met with little opposition till she called on farmer Hoskins. She told him, as he was the richest farmer in the parish, she came to him for a handsome subscription. 'Subscription!' said he, 'it is nothing but subscriptions, I think;' a man, had need be made of money,'—'Farmer,' said Mrs. Jones, 'God has blessed you with abundant prosperity, and he expects you should be liberal in proportion to your great ability.'—'I do not know what you mean by blessing,' said he: 'I have been up early and late, lived hard while I had little, and now when I thought I had got forward in the world, what with tithes taxes, and subscriptions, it all goes, I think.'—'Mr. Hoskins,' said Mrs. Jones, 'as to tithes and taxes, you well know that the richer you are the more you pay; so that your murmurs are a proof of your wealth. This is but an ungrateful return for all your blessings.'—'You are again at your blessings,' said the farmer; 'but let every one work as hard as I have done, and I dare say he will do as well. It is to my own industry I own what I have. My crops have been good, because I minded my ploughing and sowing.' 'O, farmer!' cried Mrs. Jones, 'you forget whose suns and showers make your crops to grow, and who it is that giveth strength to get riches. But I do not come to preach, but to beg.'

'Well, madam, what is the subscription now? Flannel or French? or weavers, or Swiss, or a new church, or large bread, or cheap rice? or what other new whim-wham for getting the money out of one's pocket?'—'I am going to establish a Sunday-school, farmer; and I come to you as one of the principal inhabitants of the parish, hoping your example will spur on the rest to give.'—'Why, then, said the farmer, 'as one of the principal inhabitants of the parish, I will give nothing; hoping it will spur on the rest to refuse. Of all the foolish inventions, and new fangled devices to ruin the country, that of teaching the poor to read is the very worst.'—'And I, farmer, think that to teach good principles to the lower classes, is the most likely way to save the country. Now, in order to this, we must teach them to read.'—'Not with my consent, nor my money,' said the farmer; 'for I know it always does more harm than good.'—'So it may,' said Mrs. Jones, 'if you only teach them to read, and then turn them adrift to find out books for themselves.* There is a proneness in the heart to evil, which it is our duty to oppose, and which I see you are promoting. Only look round your own kitchen; I am ashamed to see it hung round with loose songs and ballads. I grant, indeed, it would be better for young men and maids, and even your daughters, not to be able to read at all, than to read such stuff as this. But if, when they ask for bread, you will give them a stone, nay worse, a serpent, your's is the blame.' Then taking up a penny book which had a very loose title, she went on.—'I do not wonder, if you, who read such books as these, think it safer that people should not read at all.' The farmer grinned, and said, 'it is hard if a man of my substance may not divert himself; when a bit of fun costs only a penny, and a man can spare that penny, there is no harm done. When it is very hot, or very wet, and I come in to rest, and have drunk my mug of cider, I like to take up a bit of a jest-book, or a comical story, to make me laugh.'

'O, Mr. Hoskins!' replied Mrs. Jones, 'when you come in to rest from a burning sun or shower, do you never think of Him whose sun it is that is ripening your corn? or whose shower is filling the ear, or causing the grass to grow? I could tell you of some books which would strengthen such thoughts, whereas such as you read only serve to put them out of your head.'

Mrs. Jones having taken pains to let Mr. Hoskins know, that all the genteel and wealthy people had subscribed, he at last said, 'why as to the matter of that, I do not value a crown; only I think it might be better bestowed; and I am afraid my own workmen will fly in my face if once they are made scholars; and that they will think themselves too good to work.'—'Now you talk soberly, and give your reasons,' said Mrs. Jones; 'weak as they are, they deserve an answer. Do you think that either man, woman, or child, ever did his duty the worse, only because he knew it the better?' 'No, perhaps not.'—'Now, the whole extent of learning which we intend to give the poor, is only to enable them to read the Bible; a book which brings to us the glad tidings of salvation, in which every duty is explained, every doctrine brought into practice, and the highest truths made level to the meanest understanding. The knowledge of that book, and its practical influence on the heart, is the best security you can have, both for the industry and obedience of your servants. Now, can you think any man will be the worse servant for being a good Christian?'—'Perhaps not.'—'Are not the duties of children, of servants, and the poor, individually and expressly set forth in the Bible?'—'Yes.'—'Do you think any duties are likely to be well performed from any human motives, such as fear or prudence, as from those religious motives which are backed with the sanction of rewards and punish-

* It was this consideration chiefly, which stimulated the conductors of the Cheap Repository to send forth that variety of little books so peculiarly suited to the young. They considered that by means of Sunday schools, multitudes were now taught to read, who would be exposed to be corrupted by all the ribaldry and profaneness of loose songs, vicious stories, and especially by the new influx of corruption arising from jacobinical and atheistical pamphlets, and that it was a bounden duty to counteract such temptations.

ments, of heaven or hell? Even upon your own principles of worldly policy, do you think a poor man is not less likely to steal a sheep or a horse, who was taught when a boy that it was a sin, that it was breaking a commandment, to rob a hen-roost, or an orchard, than one who has been bred in ignorance of God's law? Will your property be secured so effectually by the stocks on the green, as by teaching the boys in the school, that *for all these things God will bring them into judgment?* Is a poor fellow who can read his Bible, so likely to sleep or to drink away his few hours of leisure, as one who *cannot* read? He may, and he often does, make a bad use of his reading; but I doubt he would have been as bad without it: and the hours spent in learning to read will always have been among the most harmless ones of his life.'

'Well, madam,' said the farmer, 'if you do not think that religion will spoil my young servants, I do not care if you do put me down for half a guinea. What has farmer Dobson given?'—'Half a guinea,' said Mrs. Jones.—'Well,' cried the farmer, 'it shall never be said I do not give more than he, who is only a renter. Dobson half a guinea! Why he wears his coat as threadbare as a labourer.'—'Perhaps,' replied Mrs. Jones, 'that is one reason why he gives so much.'—'Well, put me down a guinea,' cried the farmer; 'as scarce as guineas are just now, I'll never be put upon the same footing with Dobson neither.'—'Yes, and you must exert yourself besides, in insisting that your workmen send their children, and often look into the school yourself, to see if they are there, and reward or discourage them accordingly,' added Mrs. Jones. 'The most zealous teachers will flag in their exertions, if they are not animated and supported by the wealthy; and your poor youth will soon despise religious instruction as a thing forced upon them, as a hardship added to their other hardships, if it be not made pleasant by the encouraging presence, kind words, and little gratuities, from their betters.'

Here Mrs. Jones took her leave; the farmer insisted on waiting on her to the door. When they got into the yard, they spied Mr. Simpson, who was standing near a group of females, consisting of the farmer's two young daughters, and a couple of rosy dairy maids, an old blind fiddler, and a woman who led him. The woman had laid a basket on the ground, out of which she was dealing some songs to the girls, who were kneeling round it, and eagerly picking out such whose title suited their tastes. On seeing the clergyman come up, the fiddler's companion, (for I am sorry to say she was not his wife) pushed some of the songs to the bottom of the basket, turned round to the company, and, in a whining tone, asked if they would please to buy a godly book. Mr. Simpson saw through the hypocrisy at once, and instead of making any answer, took out of one of the girl's hands a song which the woman had not been able to snatch away. He was shocked and grieved to see that these young girls were about to read, to sing, and to learn by heart such ribaldry as he was ashamed even to cast his eyes on. He turned about to the girl, and gravely, but mildly said, 'Young woman, what do you think should be done to a person who should be found carrying a box of poison round the country, and leaving a little to every house? The girls agreed that such a person ought to be hanged. 'That he should,' said the farmer, 'if I was upon the jury, and quartered too.' The fiddler and his woman were of the same opinion, declaring, *they* would do no such a wicked thing for the world, for if they were poor they were honest. Mr. Simpson, turning to the other girl, said, 'Which is of most value, the soul or the body?'—'The soul, sir,' said the girl.—'Why so?' said he.—'Because, sir, I have heard you say in the pulpit, the soul is to last for ever.'—'Then,' cried Mr. Simpson, in a stern voice, turning to the fiddler's woman, 'are you not ashamed to sell poison for that part which is to last forever? poison for the soul?' 'Poison?' said the terrified girl, throwing down the book, and shuddering as people do who are afraid they have touched something infectious. 'Poison!' echoed the farmer's daughters, recollecting with horror the ratsbane which Lion, the old house-dog, had got at the day before, and after eating which she had seen him drop down dead in convulsions. 'Yes,' said Mr. Simpson to the woman, 'I do again repeat, the souls of these innocent girls will be poisoned, and may be eternally ruined by this vile trash which you carry about.'

'I now see,' said Mrs. Jones to the farmer, 'the reason why you think learning to read does more harm than good. It is indeed far better that they should never know how to tell a letter, unless you keep such trash as this out of their way, and provide them with what is good, or at least what is harmless. Still this is not the fault of reading, but the abuse of it. Wine is still a good cordial, though it is too often abused to the purpose of drunkenness.'

The farmer said that neither of his maids could read their horn-book, though he owned he often heard them singing that song which the parson thought so bad, but for his part it made them as merry as a nightingale.

'Yes,' said Mrs. Jones, 'as a proof that it is not merely being able to read which does the mischief, I have often heard, as I have been crossing a hay-field, young girls singing such indecent ribaldry as has driven me out of the field, though I well knew they could not read a line of what they were singing, but had caught it from others. So you see you may as well say the memory is a wicked talent because some people misapply it, as to say that reading is dangerous because some folks abuse it.

While they were talking, the fiddler and his woman were trying to steal away unobserved, but Mr. Simpson stopped them, and sternly said, 'Woman, I shall have some farther talk with you. I am a magistrate, as well as a minister, and if I know it, I will no more allow a wicked book to be sold in my parish than a dose of poison.' The girls threw away all their songs, thanked Mr. Simpson, begged Mrs. Jones would take them into her school after they had done milking in the evenings, that they might learn to read only what was proper. They promised they would never more deal with any but sober, honest hawkers, such as sell good little

books, Christmas carols, and harmless songs, and desired the fiddler's woman never to call there again.

This little incident afterwards confirmed Mrs. Jones in a plan she had before some thoughts of putting in practice. This was, after her school had been established a few months, to invite all the well-disposed grown-up youth of the parish to meet her at the school an hour or two on a Sunday evening, after the necessary business of the dairy, and of serving the cattle was over. Both Mrs. Jones and her agent had the talent of making this time pass so agreeably, by their manner of explaining Scripture, and of impressing the heart by serious and affectionate discourse, that in a short time the evening school was nearly filled with a second company, after the younger ones were dismissed. In time, not only the servants, but the sons and daughters of the most substantial people in the parish attended. At length many of the parents, pleased with the improvement so visible in the young people, got a habit of dropping in, that they might learn how to instruct their own families. And it was observed that as the school filled, not only the fives-court and public house were thinned, but even Sunday gossipping and tea-visiting declined. Even farmer Hoskins, who was at first very angry with his maids for leaving off those *merry* songs (as he called them) was so pleased by the manner in which the psalms were sung at the school, that he promised Mrs. Jones to make her a present of half a sheep towards her first May-day feast. Of this feast some account shall be given hereafter; and the reader may expect some further account of the Sunday school in the history of Hester Wilmot.*

*For a continuation of the Sunday School, see the story of Hester Wilmot, in two parts, in this edition. It was thought proper to separate them in this collection as the two preceding numbers rather tend to enforce the duties of the higher and middle class, and the two subsequent ones those of the poor.

THE PILGRIMS.

AN ALLEGORY.

Methought I was once upon a time travelling through a certain land which was very full of people; but, what was rather odd, not one of all this multitude was at home; they were all bound to a far distant country. Though it was permitted by the lord of the land that these pilgrims might associate together for their present mutual comfort and convenience; and each was not only allowed, but commanded, to do the others all the services he could upon their journey, yet it was decreed, that every individual traveller must enter the far country singly. There was a great gulf at the end of the journey, which every one must pass alone, and at his own risk, and the friendship of the whole united world could be of no use in shooting that gulf. The exact time when each was to pass was not known to any; this the lord always kept a close secret out of kindness, yet still they were as sure that the time must come, and that at no very great distance, as if they had been informed of the very moment. Now, as they know they were always liable to be called away at an hour's notice, one would have thought they would have been chiefly employed in packing up, and preparing, and getting every thing in order. But this was so far from being the case, that it was almost the only thing which they did not think about.

Now, I only appeal to you, my readers, if any of you are setting out upon a little common journey, if it is only to London or York, is not all your leisure time employed in settling your business at home, and packing up every little necessary for your expedition? And does not the fear of neglecting any thing you ought to remember, or may have occasion for, haunt your mind, and sometimes even intrude upon you unseasonably? And when you are actually on your journey, especially if you have never been to that place before, or are likely to remain there, don't you begin to think a little about the pleasures and the employments of the place, and to wish to know a little what sort of a city London or York is? Don't you wonder what is doing there, and are you not anxious to know whether you are properly qualified for the business, or the company you expect to be engaged in? Do you never look at the map, or consult Brooke's Gazetteer? And don't you try to pick up from your fellow-passengers in the stage coach any little information you can get? And though you may be obliged, out of civility, to converse with them on common subjects, yet do not your secret thoughts still run upon London or York, its business, or its pleasures? And above all, if you are likely to set out early, are you not afraid of over-sleeping, and does not that fear keep you upon the watch, so that you are commonly up and ready before the porter comes to summon you? Reader! if this be your case, how surprised will you be to hear that the travellers to the *far country* have not half your prudence, though embarked on a journey of infinitely more importance, bound to a land where nothing can be sent after them, in which, when they are once settled, all errors are irretrievable.

I observed that these pilgrims, instead of being upon the watch, lest they should be ordered off unprepared; instead of laying up any provision, or even making memorandums of what they would be likely to want at the end of their journey, spent most of their time in crowds, either in the way of traffic or diversion. At first, when I saw them so much engaged in conversing with each other, I thought it a good sign, and listened attentively to their talk, not doubting but the chief turn of it would be about the climate, or

treasures, or society, they should probably meet with in the *far country*. I supposed they might be also discussing about the best and safest road to it, and that each was availing himself of the knowledge of his neighbour, on a subject of equal importance to all. I listened to every party, but in scarcely any did I hear one word about the land to which they were bound, though it was their home, the place where their whole interest, expectation, and inheritance lay; to which also great part of their friends were gone before, and whither they were sure all the rest would follow.—Instead of this, their whole talk was about the business, or the pleasures, or the fashions of the strange but bewitching country which they were merely passing through, and in which they had not one foot of land which they were sure of calling their own for the next quarter of an hour. What little estate they had was *personal*, and not real, and that was a mortgaged, life-hold tenement of clay, not properly their own, but only lent to them on a short uncertain lease, of which three-score years and ten was considered as the longest period, and very few indeed lived in it to the end of the term; for this was always at the *will of the lord*, part of whose prerogative it was, that he could take away the lease at pleasure, knock down the stoutest tenement at a single blow, and turn out the poor shivering, helpless inhabitant naked, to that *far country* for which he had made no provision. Sometimes, in order to quicken the pilgrim in his preparation, the lord would break down the tenement by slow degrees; sometimes he would let it tumble by its own natural decay; for it was only built to last a certain term, it would often grow so uncomfortable by increasing dilapidations even before the ordinary lease was out, that the lodging was hardly worth keeping, though the tenant could seldom be persuaded to think so, but fondly clung to it to the last.—First the thatch on the top of the tenement changed colour, then it fell off and left the roof bare; then the grinders ceased because they were few; then the windows became so darkened that the owner could scarcely see through them; then one prop fell away, then another, then the uprights became bent, and the whole fabric trembled and tottered, with every other symptom of a falling house. But what was remarkable, the more uncomfortable the house became, and the less prospect there was of staying in it, the more preposterously fond did the tenant grow of his precarious habitation.

On some occasions the lord ordered his messengers, of which he has a great variety, to batter, injure, deface, and almost demolish the frail building, even while it seemed new and strong; this was what the landlord called *giving warning*; but many a tenant would not take warning, and so fond of staying where he was, even under all these inconveniences, that at last he was cast out by ejectment, not being prevailed on to leave his dwelling in a proper manner, though one would have thought the fear of being turned out would have whetted his diligence in preparing *for a better and more enduring inheritance*. For though the people were only tenants at will in these crazy tenements, yet, through the goodness of the same lord, they were assured that he never turned them out of these habitations before he had on his part provided for them a better, so that there was not such a landlord in the world; and though their present dwelling was but frail, being only slightly run up to serve the occasion, yet they might hold their future possession by a most certain tenure, the *word of the lord himself*. This word was entered in a covenant, or title-deed, consisting of many sheets, and because a great many good things were given away in this deed, a book was made of which every soul might get a copy.

This indeed had not always been the case; because, till a few ages back, there had been a sort of monopoly in the case, and 'the wise and prudent;' that is, the cunning and fraudful, had hid these things from 'the babes and sucklings;' that is, from the low and ignorant, and many frauds had been practised, and the poor had been cheated of their right; so that not being allowed to read and judge for themselves, they had been sadly imposed upon; but all these tricks had been put an end to more than two hundred years when I passed through the country, and the meanest man who could read might then have a copy; so that he might see himself what he had to trust to; and even those who could not read, might hear it read once or twice every week, at least, without pay, by learned and holy men, whose business it was. But it surprised me to see how few comparatively made use of these vast advantages. Of those who had a copy, many laid it carelessly by, expressed a *general* belief in the truth of the title deed, a *general* satisfaction that they should come in for a share of the inheritance, a *general* good opinion of the lord whose word it was, and a *general* disposition to take his promise upon trust; always, however, intending, at a *convenient season*, to inquire farther into the matter; but this convenient season seldom came; and this neglect of theirs was construed by their lord into a forfeiture of the inheritance.

At the end of this country lay the vast gulf mentioned before; it was shadowed over by a broad and thick cloud, which prevented the pilgrims from seeing in a distinct manner what was doing behind it, yet such beams of brightness now and then darted through the cloud, as enabled those who used a telescope, provided for that purpose, to see *the substance of things hoped for*; but it was not every one who could make use of this telescope; no eye indeed was *naturally* disposed to it; but an earnest desire of getting a glimpse of the invisible realities, gave such a strength and steadiness to the eye which used the telescope, as enabled it to discern many things which could not be seen by the natural sight.—Above the cloud was this inscription: *The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.* Of these last things many glorious descriptions had been given; but as those splendors were at a distance, and as the pilgrims in general did not care to use the telescope, these distant glories made little impression.

The glorious inheritance which lay beyond the cloud, was called, *The things above*, while a multitude of trifling objects, which appeared contemptibly small when looked at through the

telescope, were called *the things below*. Now, as we know it is nearness which gives size and bulk to any object, it was not wonderful that these ill-judging pilgrims were more struck with these baubles and trifles, which, by laying close at hand, were visible and tempting to the naked eye, and which made up the sum of *the things below*, than with the remote glories of *the things above;* but this was chiefly owing to their not making use of the telescope, through which, if you examined thoroughly *the things below*, they seemed to shrink almost down to nothing, which was indeed their real size; while *the things above* appeared the more beautiful and vast, the more the telescope was used. But the surprising part of the story was this; not that the pilgrims were captivated at first sight with *the things below*, for that was natural enough; but that when they had tried them all over and over, and found themselves deceived and disappointed in almost every one of them, it did not at all lessen their fondness, and they grasped at them again with the same eagerness as before. There were some gay fruits which looked alluring, but on being opened, instead of a kernel, they were found to contain rottenness; and those which seemed the fullest, often proved on trial to be quite hollow and empty. Those which were most tempting to the eye, were often found to be wormwood to the taste, or poison to the stomach, and many flowers that seemed most bright and gay had a worm gnawing at the root; and it was observable that on the finest and brightest of them was seen, when looked at through the telescope, the word *vanity* inscribed in large characters.

Among the chief attractions of *the things below* were certain little lumps of yellow clay, on which almost every eye and every heart was fixed. When I saw the variety of uses to which this clay could be converted, and the respect which was shown to those who could scrape together the greatest number of pieces, I did not much wonder at the general desire to pick up some of them; but when I beheld the anxiety, the wakefulness, the competitions, the contrivances, the tricks, the frauds, the scuffling, the pushing, the turmoiling, the kicking, the shoving, the cheating, the circumvention, the envy, the malignity, which was excited by a desire to possess this article; when I saw the general scramble among those who had little to get much, and of those who had much to get more, then I could not help applying to these people a proverb in use among us, *that gold may be bought too dear.*

Though I saw that there were various sorts of baubles which engaged the hearts of different travellers, such as an ell of red or blue ribbon, for which some were content to forfeit their future inheritance, committing the sin of Esau, without his temptation of hunger; yet the yellow clay I found was the grand object for which most hands were scrambling, and most souls were risked. One thing was extraordinary, that the nearer these people were to being turned out of their tenement, the fonder they grew of these pieces of clay; so that I naturally concluded they meant to take the clay with them to the *far country*, to assist them in their establishment in it; but I soon learnt this clay was not current there, the lord having farther declared to these pilgrims that as *they had brought nothing into this world, they could carry nothing away.*

I inquired of the different people who were raising the various heaps of clay, some of a larger, some of a smaller size, why they discovered such unremitting anxiety, and for whom? Some, whose piles were immense, told me they were heaping up for their children; this I thought very right, till, on casting my eyes around, I observed many of the children of these very people had large heaps of their own. Others told me it was for their grand-children; but on inquiry I found these were not yet born, and in many cases there was little chance that they ever would. The truth, on a close examination, proved to be, that the true genuine heapers really heaped for themselves; that it was in fact neither for friend nor child, but to gratify an inordinate appetite of their own. Nor was I much surprised after this to see these yellow hoards at length *canker, and the rust of them become a witness against the hoarders, and eat their flesh as it were fire.*

Many, however, who had set out with a high heap of their father's raising, before they had got one third of their journey, had scarcely a single piece left. As I was wondering what had caused these enormous piles to vanish in so short a time, I spied scattered up and down the country all sorts of odd inventions, for some or other of which the vain possessors of the great heaps of clay had truckled and bartered them away in fewer hours than their ancestors had spent years in getting them together. O what a strange unaccountable medley it was! and what was ridiculous enough, I observed that the greatest quantity of the clay was always exchanged for things that were of no use that I could discover, owing I suppose to my ignorance of the manners of the country.

In one place I saw large heaps exhausted, in order to set two idle pampered horses a running; but the worst part of the joke was, the horses did not run to fetch or carry any thing, of course were of no kind of use, but merely to let the gazers see which could run fastest. Now, this gift of swiftness, exercised to no useful purpose, was only one out of many instances, I observed, of talents employed to no end. In another place I saw whole piles of the clay spent to maintain long ranges of buildings full of dogs, on provisions which would have nicely fattened some thousands of pilgrims, who sadly wanted fattening, and whose ragged tenements were out at elbows, for want of a little help to repair them. Some of the piles were regularly pulled down once in seven years, in order to corrupt certain needy pilgrims to belie their consciences, by doing that for a bribe which they were bound to do from principle. Others were spent in playing with white stiff bits of paper, painted over with red and black spots, in which I thought there must be some conjuring, because the very touch of these painted pasteboards made the heaps fly from one to another, and back again to the same, in a way that natural causes could not account for. There was another proof that there must be some magic in this business which was that if a pasteboard with red spots

fell into a hand which wanted a black one, the person changed colour, his eyes flashed fire, and he discovered other symptoms of madness, which showed there was some witchcraft in the case. These clean little pasteboards as harmless as they looked, had the wonderful power of pulling down the highest piles in less time than all the other causes put together. I observed that many small piles were given in exchange for an enchanted liquor which when the purchaser had drunk to a little excess, he lost power of managing the rest of his heap without losing the love of it; and thus the excess of indulgence, by making him a beggar, deprived him of that very gratification on which his heart was set.

Now I find it was the opinion of sober pilgrims, that either hoarding the clay, or trucking it for any such purposes as the above, was thought exactly the same offence in the eyes of the lord; and it was expected that when they should come under his more immediate jurisdiction in the *far country*, the penalty annexed to hoarding and squandering would be nearly the same.—While I examined the countenances of the owners of the heaps, I observed that those who I well knew never intended to make any use at all of their heap, were far more terrified at the thought of losing it, or of being torn from it, than those were who were employing it in the most useful manner. Those who best knew what to do with it, set their hearts least upon it, and were always most willing to leave it. But such riddles were common in this odd country. It was indeed a very land of paradoxes.

Now I wondered why these pilgrims, who were naturally made erect with an eye formed to look up to *the things above*, yet had their eyes almost constantly bent in the other direction, riveted to the earth, and fastened *on things below*, just like those animals who walk on all four. I was told they had not always been subject to this weakness of sight, and proneness to earth: that they had originally been upright and beautiful, having been created after the image of the lord, who was himself the perfection of beauty; that he had, at first, placed them in a far superior situation, which he had given them in perpetuity; but that their first ancestors fell from it through pride and carelessness; that upon this the freehold was taken away, they lost their original strength, brightness, and beauty, and were driven out into this strange country, where, however, they had every opportunity given them of recovering their original health, and the lord's favour and likeness; for they were become so disfigured, and were grown so unlike him, that you would hardly believe they were his own children, though, in some, the resemblance was become again visible.

The lord, however, was so merciful, that, instead of giving them up to the dreadful consequences of their own folly, as he might have done without any impeachment of his justice, he gave them immediate comfort, and promised them that, in due time, his own son should come down and restore them to the future inheritance which he should purchase for them. And now it was, that in order to keep up their spirits, after they had lost their estate through the folly of their ancestors, that he began to give them a part of their former title deed. He continued to send them portions of it from time to time by different faithful servants, whom, however, these ungrateful people generally used ill, and some of whom they murdered. But for all this, the lord was so very forgiving, that he at length sent these mutineers a proclamation of full and free pardon by his son. This son, though they used him in a more cruel manner than they had done any of his servants, yet after having *finished the work his father gave him to do*, went back into the *far country* to prepare a place for all them who believe in him; and there he still lives; begging and pleading for those unkind people, whom he still loves and forgives, and will restore to the purchased inheritance on the easy terms of their being heartily sorry for what they have done, thoroughly desirous of pardon, and convinced that *he is able and willing to save to the utmost all them that come unto him.*

I saw, indeed, that many old offenders appeared to be sorry for what they had done; that is, they did not like to be punished for it. They were willing enough to be delivered from the penalty of their guilt, but they did not heartily wish to be delivered from the power of it. Many declared, in the most public manner, once every week, that they were sorry they had done amiss· *that they had erred and strayed like lost sheep*, but it was not enough to *declare* their sorrow, ever so often, if they gave no other sign of their penitence. For there was so little truth in them, that the lord required other proofs of their sincerity beside their own word, for they often lied with their lips and dissembled with their tongue But those who professed to be penitents must give some outward proof of it. They were neither allowed to raise heaps of clay, by circumventing their neighbours, or to keep great piles lying by them useless; nor must they barter them for any of those idle vanities which reduced the heaps on a sudden: for I found that among the grand articles of future reckoning, the use they had made of the heaps would be a principal one.

I was sorry to observe many of the fairer part of these pilgrims spend too much of their heaps in adorning and beautifying their tenements of clay, in painting, white-washing, and enamelling them. All those tricks, however, did not preserve them from decay; and when they grew old, they even looked worse for all this cost and varnish. Some, however, acted a more sensible part, and spent no more upon their mouldering tenements than just to keep them whole and clean, and in good repair, which is what every tenant ought to do; and I observed that those who were most moderate in the care of their own tenements, were most attentive to repair and warm the ragged tenements of others. But none did this with much zeal or acceptance, but those who had acquired a habit of overlooking *the things below*, and who also, by the constant use of the telescope had got their natural weak and dim sight so strengthened, as to be able to discern pretty distinctly the nature of the *things above*. The habit of fixing their eyes on these glories made all the shining trifles, which compose the mass of *things below*, at last appear in

their own diminutive littleness. For it was in this case particularly true, that things are only big or little by comparison; and there was no other way of making the *things below*, appear as small as they really were, but by comparing them, by means of the telescope, with the *things above*. But I observed that the false judgment of the pilgrims ever kept pace with their wrong practices; for those who kept their eyes fastened on the *things below*, were reckoned wise in their generation, while the few who looked forward to the future glories, were accounted by the bustlers, or heapers, to be either fools or mad.

Most of these pilgrims went on in adorning their tenements, adding to their heaps, grasping the *things below* as if they would never let them go, shutting their eyes, instead of using their telescope, and neglecting their title deed, as if it was the parchment of another man's estate, and not of their own; till one after another each felt his tenement tumbling about his ears —Oh! then what a busy, bustling, anxious, terrifying, distracting moment was that! What a deal of business was to be done, and what a strange time was this to do it in! Now, to see the confusion and dismay occasioned by having left every thing to the last minute. First, some one was sent for to make over the yellow heaps, to another, which the heaper now found would be of no use to himself in shooting the gulf; a transfer which ought to have been made while the tenement was sound. Then there was a consultation between two or three masons at once perhaps, to try to patch up the walls, and strengthen the props, and stop the decays of the tumbling tenement; but not till the masons were forced to declare it was past repairing (a truth they were rather too apt to keep back) did the tenant seriously think it was time to pack up, prepare and begone. Then what sending for the wise men who professed to explain the title deed! And oh! what remorse that they had neglected to examine it till their senses were too confused for so weighty a business! What reproaches, or what exhortations to others, to look better after their own affairs than they had done! Even to the wisest of the inhabitants the falling of their tenements was a solemn thing; solemn, but not surprising; they had long been packing up and preparing; they praised their lord's goodness that they had been suffered to stay so long; many acknowledged the mercy of their frequent warnings, and confessed that those very dilapidations which had made the house uncomfortable had been a blessing, as it had set them on diligent preparation for their future inheritance; had made them more earnest in examining their title to it, and had set them on such a frequent application to the telescope, that *the things above* had seemed every day to approach nearer and nearer, and the *things below* to recede and vanish in proportion. These desired not to be *unclothed but to be clothed upon, for they knew that if their tabernacle was dissolved, they had an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*'

THE VALLEY OF TEARS

A VISION.

OR, BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURTHENS.

Once upon a time methought I set out upon a long journey, and the place through which I travelled appeared to be a dark valley, which was called the Valley of Tears. It had obtained this name, not only on account of the many sorrowful adventures which poor passengers commonly meet with in their journey through it; but also because most of these travellers entered it weeping and crying, and left it in very great pain and anguish. This vast valley was full of people of all colours, ages, sizes and descriptions. But whether white, or black, or tawny, all were travelling the same road; or rather they were taking different little paths which all led to the same common end.

Now it was remarkable, that notwithstanding the different complexions, ages, and tempers of this vast variety of people, yet all resembled each other in this one respect, that each had a burthen on his back which he was destined to carry through the toil and heat of the day, until he should arrive, by a longer or shorter course, at his journey's end. These burthens would in general have made the pilgrimage quite intolerable, had not the lord of the valley, out of his great compassion for these poor pilgrims, provided, among other things, the following means for their relief:

In their full view over the entrance of the valley, there were written, in great letters of gold, the following words:

Bear ye one another's burthens.

Now I saw in my vision that many of the travellers hurried on without stopping to read this inscription, and others, though they had once read it, yet paid little or no attention to it. A third sort thought it very good advice for other people, but very seldom applied it to themselves. They uniformly desired to avail themselves of the assistance which by this injunction others were bound to offer them, but seldom considered that the obligation was mutual, and that reciprocal wants and reciprocal services formed the strong cord in the bond of charity. In short, I saw that too many of these people were of opinion that they had burthens enough of their own, and that there was therefore no occasion to take upon them those of others; so each tried to make his own load as light, and his own journey as pleasant as he could, without so much as once casting a thought on a poor overloaded neigh-

bour. Here, however, I have to make a rather singular remark, by which I shall plainly show the folly of these selfish people. It was so ordered and contrived by the lord of this valley, that if any one stretched out his hand to lighten a neighbour's burthen, in fact he never failed to find that he at that moment also lightened his own. Besides the benefit of helping each other, was as mutual as the obligation. If a man helped his neighbour, it commonly happened that some other neighbour came by-and-by and helped him in his turn; for there was no such thing as what we called *independence* in the whole valley. Not one of all these travellers, however stout and strong, could move on comfortably without assistance, for so the lord of the valley, whose laws were all of them kind and good, had expressly ordained.

I stood still to watch the progress of these poor way-faring people, who moved slowly on, like so many ticket-porters, with burthens of various kinds on their backs; of which some were heavier, and some were lighter, but from a burthen of one kind or other, not one traveller was entirely free. There might be some difference in the degree, and some distinction in the nature, but exemption there was none.

The Widow.

A sorrowful widow, oppressed with the burthen of grief for the loss of an affectionate husband, moved heavily on; and would have been bowed down by her heavy load, had not the surviving children with great alacrity stepped forward and supported her. Their kindness after a while, so much lightened the load which threatened at first to be intolerable, that she even went on her way with cheerfulness, and more than repaid their help, by applying the strength she derived from it to their future assistance.

The Husband.

I next saw a poor old man tottering under a burthen so heavy, that I expected him every moment to sink under it. I peeped into his pack, and saw it was made up of many sad articles; there were poverty, oppression, sickness, debt, and, what made by far the heaviest part, undutiful children. I was wondering how it was that he got on even so well as he did, till I spied his wife, a kind, meek, christian woman, who was doing her utmost to assist him. She quietly got behind, gently laid her shoulder to the burthen, and carried a much larger portion of it than appeared to me when I was at a distance. It was not the smallest part of the benefit that she was anxious to conceal it. She not only sustained him by her strength, but cheered him by her counsels. She told him, that 'through much tribulation we must enter into rest;' that 'he that overcometh shall inherit all things.' In short, she so supported his fainting spirit, that he was enabled to 'run with patience the race which was set before him.,

The Kind Neighbour.

An infirm blind woman was creeping forward with a very heavy burthen, in which were packed sickness and want, with numberless other of those raw materials, out of which human misery is worked up. She was so weak that she could not have got on at all, had it not been for the kind assistance of another woman almost as poor as herself; who, though she had no light burthen of her own, cheerfully lent an helping hand to a fellow traveller who was still more heavily laden. This friend had indeed little or nothing to give, but the very voice of kindness is soothing to the weary. And I remarked in many other cases, that it was not so much the degree of the help afforded, as the manner of helping that lightened the burthens. Some had a coarse, rough, clumsy way of assisting a neighbour, which, though in fact it might be of real use, yet seemed, by galling the traveller, to add to the load it was intended to lighten; while I observed in others that so cheap a kindness as a mild word, or even an affectionate look made a poor burthened wretch move on cheerily.—The bare feeling that some human being cared for him, seemed to lighten the load.—But to return to this kind neighbour. She had a little old book in her hand, the covers of which were torn out by much use. When she saw the blind woman ready to faint, she would read her a few words out of this book, such as the following—'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'—'Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted.'—'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'—For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' These quickened the pace, and sustained the spirits of the blind traveller: and the kind neighbour by thus directing the attention of the poor sufferer to the blessings of a better world, helped to enable her to sustain the afflictions of this, more effectually than if she had had gold and silver to bestow on her.

The Clergyman.

A pious minister, sinking under the weight of a distressed parish, whose worldly wants he was totally unable to bear, was suddenly relieved by a charitable widow, who came up and took all the sick and hungry on her own shoulders as her part of the load. The burthen of the parish thus divided became tolerable. The minister being no longer bowed down by the temporal distresses of his people, applied himself cheerfully to his own part of the weight. And it was pleasant to see how those two persons, neither of them very strong, or rich, or healthy, by thus kindly uniting together, were enabled to bear the weight of a whole parish; though singly, either of them must have sunk under the attempt. And I remember one great grief I felt during my whole journey was, that I did not see more of this union and concurring kindness, more of this acting in concert, by which all the burthens might have been so easily divided. It troubled me to observe, that of all the laws of the valley there was not one more frequently broken than *the law of kindness.*

The Negroes.

I now spied a swarm of poor black men, women, and children, a multitude which no man

could number; these groaned and toiled, and sweated, and bled under far heavier loads than I have yet seen. But for a while no man helped them; at length a few white travellers were touched with the sorrowful sighing of those millions, and very heartily did they put their hands to the burthens; but their number was not quite equal to the work they had undertaken. I perceived, however, that they never lost sight of those poor heavy-laden wretches; though often repulsed, they returned again to the charge; though discomfited, they renewed the effort, and some even pledged themselves to an annual attempt till the project was accomplished; and as the number of these generous helpers increased every year, I felt a comfortable hope, that before all the blacks got out of the valley, the whites would fairly divide the burthen, and the loads would be effectually lightened.

Among the travellers, I had occasion to remark, that those who most kicked and struggled under their burthens, only made them so much the heavier, for their shoulders became extremely galled by those vain and ineffectual struggles. The load, if borne patiently, would in the end have turned even to the advantage of the bearers, for so the lord of the valley had kindly decreed; but as to these grumblers, they had all the smart, and none of the benefit; they had the present suffering without the future reward. But the thing which made all these burthens seem so very heavy was, that in every one without exception, there was a certain *inner packet*, which most of the travellers took pains to conceal, and kept carefully wrapped up; and while they were forward enough to complain of the other part of their burthens, few said a word about this, though in truth it was the pressing weight of this *secret packet* which served to render the general burthen so intolerable. In spite of all their caution, I contrived to get a peep at it. I found in each that this packet had the same label; the word SIN was written on all as a general title, and in ink so black, that they could not wash it out. I observed that most of them took no small pains to hide the writing; but I was surprised to see that they did not try to get rid of the load but the label. If any kind friend who assisted these people in bearing their burthens, did but so much as hint at the *secret packet*, or advise them to get rid of it, they took fire at once, and commonly denied they had any such article in their portmanteau; and it was those whose *secret packet* swelled to the most enormous size, who most stoutly denied they had any.

I saw with pleasure, however, that some who had long laboured heartily to get rid of this inward packet, at length found it much diminished, and the more this packet shrunk in size, the lighter was the other part of their burthen also. I observed, moreover, that though the label, always remained in some degree indelible, yet that those who were earnest to get rid of the load, found that the original traces of the label grew fainter also; it was never quite obliterated in any, though in some cases it seemed nearly effaced.

Then methought, all at once, I heard a voice, as it had been the voice of an angel, crying out and saying, 'Ye unhappy pilgrims, why are ye troubled about the burthen which ye are doomed to bear through this valley of tears? Know ye not, that as soon as ye shall have escaped out of this valley the whole burthen shall drop off, provided ye neglect not to remove that inward weight, that secret load of SIN which principally oppresses you? Study then the whole will of the lord of this valley. Learn from him how this heavy part of your burthens may now be lessened, and how at last it shall be removed for ever. Be comforted. Faith and hope may cheer you even in this valley. The passage, though it seems long to weary travellers, is comparatively short; for beyond there is a land of everlasting rest, where ye shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, where ye shall be led by living fountains of waters, and all tears shall be wiped away from your eyes.'

THE STRAIT GATE AND THE BROAD WAY

AN ALLEGORY.

Now I had a second vision of what was passing in the Valley of Tears. Methought I saw again the same kind of travellers whom I had seen in the former part, and they were wandering at large through the same vast wilderness. At first setting out on his journey, each traveller had a small lamp so fixed in his bosom that it seemed to make a part of himself; but as this natural light did not prove to be sufficient to direct them in the right way, the king of the country, in pity to their wanderings and blindness, out of his gracious condescension, promised to give these poor wayfaring people an additional supply of light from his own royal treasury. But as he did not choose to lavish his favours where there seemed no disposition to receive them, he would not bestow any of his oil on such as did not think it worth asking for 'Ask and ye shall have,' was the universal rule he had laid down for them. But though they knew the condition of the obligation, many were prevented from asking through pride and vanity, for they thought they had light enough already, preferring the feeble glimmerings of their own lamp, to all the offered light from the king's treasury. Yet it was observed of those who rejected it, as thinking they had enough, that hardly any acted up to what even their own natural light showed them. Others were deterred from asking, because they were told that this light not only pointed out the dangers and difficulties of the road, but by a certain reflecting power, it turned inward on themselves, and revealed to them ugly sights in their own hearts, to which they rather chose to be blind; for those travellers were of that preposterous number,

who 'chose darkness rather than light,' and for the old obvious reason, 'because their deeds were evil.' Now, it was remarkable that these two properties were inseparable, and that the lamp would be of little outward use, except to those who used it as an internal reflector. A threat and a promise also never failed to accompany the offer of this light from the king; a promise that to those who improved what they had, more should be given; and a threat, that from those who did not use it wisely, should be taken away even what they had.

I observed that when the road was very dangerous; when terrors, and difficulties, and death beset the fervent traveller; then, on their faithful importunity, the king voluntarily gave large and bountiful supplies of light, such as in common seasons never could have been expected: always proportioning the quantity given to the necessity of the case; 'as their day was, such was their light and strength.'

Though many chose to depend entirely on their own original lamp, yet it was observed that this light was apt to go out if left to itself. It was easily blown out by those violent gusts which were perpetually howling through the wilderness; and indeed it was the natural tendency of that unwholesome atmosphere to extinguish it, just as you have seen a candle go out when exposed to the vapours and foul air of a damp room. It was a melancholy sight to see multitudes of travellers heedlessly pacing on, boasting they had light enough of their own, and despising the offer of more. But what astonished me most of all was, to see many, and some of them too accounted men of first rate wit, actually busy in blowing out their own light, because while any spark of it remained, it only served to torment them, and point out things which they did not wish to see. And having once blown out their own light, they were not easy till they had blown out that of their neighbours also; so that a good part of the wilderness seemed to exhibit a sort of universal *blindman's buff*, each endeavoring to catch his neighbour, while his own voluntary blindness exposed him to be caught himself; so that each was actually falling into the snare he was laying for another, till at length, as selfishness is the natural consequence of blindness, 'catch he that catch can,' became the general motto of the wilderness.

Now I saw in my vision, that there were some others who were busy in strewing the most gaudy flowers over the numerous bogs, and precipices, and pitfalls with which the wilderness abounded; and thus making danger and death look so gay, that poor thoughtless creatures seemed to delight in their own destruction. Those pitfalls did not appear deep or dangerous to the eye, because over them were raised gay edifices with alluring names. These were filled with singing men and singing women, and with dancing, and feasting, and gaming, and drinking, and jollity, and madness. But though the scenery was gay, the footing was unsound. The floors were full of holes, through which the unthinking merry-makers were continually sinking. Some tumbled through in the middle of a song; more at the end of a feast; and though there was many a cup of intoxication wreathed round with flowers, yet there was always poison at the bottom. But what most surprised me was that though no day past over their heads in which some of the most merry-makers did not drop through, yet their loss made little impression on those who were left. Nay, instead of being awakened to more circumspection, and self-denial by the continual dropping off of those about them, several of them seemed to borrow from thence an argument of a direct contrary tendency, and the very shortness of time was only urged as a reason to use it more sedulously for the indulgence in sensual delights. 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' 'Let us crown ourselves with rose-buds before they are withered.' With these and a thousand other such little inscriptions, the gay garlands of the wilderness were decorated. Some admired poets were set to work to set the most corrupt sentiments to the most harmonious tunes; these were sung without scruple, chiefly indeed by the looser sons of riot, but not seldom also by the more orderly daughters of sobriety, who were not ashamed to sing to the sound of instruments, sentiments so corrupt and immoral, that they would have blushed to speak or read them: but the music seemed to sanctify the corruption, especially such as was connected with love or drinking.

Now I observed that all the travellers who had so much as a spark of life left, seemed every now and then, as they moved onwards, to cast an eye, though with very different degrees of attention, towards the *Happy Land*, which they were told lay at the end of their journey; but as they could not see very far forward, and as they knew there was a *dark and shadowy valley* which must needs be crossed before they could attain to the *Happy Land*, they tried to turn their attention from it as much as they could. The truth is, they were not sufficiently apt to consult a map and a road-book which the King had given them, and which pointed out the path to the *Happy Land* so clearly, that the 'wayfaring men, though simple, could not err.' This map also defined very correctly the boundaries of the *Happy Land* from the *Land of Misery*, both of which lay on the other side of the dark and shadowy valley; but so many beacons and light-houses were erected, so many clear and explicit directions furnished for avoiding the one country and attaining the other, that it was not the king's fault, if even one single traveller got wrong. But I am inclined to think that, in spite of the map and the road-book, and the King's word, and his offers of assistance to get them thither, that the travellers in general did not heartily and truly believe, after all, that there was any such country as the *Happy Land*; or at least the paltry and transient pleasures of the wilderness so besotted them, the thoughts of the dark and shadowy valley so frightened them, that they thought they should be more comfortable by banishing all thought and forecast, and driving the subject quite out of their heads.

Now, I also saw in my dream, that there were two roads through the wilderness, one of which every traveller must needs take. The first was narrow, and difficult, and rough, but it was infallibly safe. It did not admit the traveller to stray either to the right hand or to the left, yet

it was far from being destitute of real comforts or sober pleasures. The other was a *broad* and *tempting way*, abounding with luxurious fruits and gaudy flowers, to tempt the eye and please the appetite. To forget this *dark valley*, through which every traveller was well assured he must one day pass, seemed the object of general desire. To this grand end, all that human ingenuity could invent was industriously set to work. The travellers read, and they wrote, and they painted, and they sung, and they danced, and they drank as they went along, not so much because they all cared for these things, or had any real joy in them, as because this restless activity served to divert their attention from ever being fixed on the *dark and shadowy valley.*

The king, who knew the thoughtless tempers of the travellers, and how apt they were to forget their journey's end, had thought of a thousand little kind attentions to warn them of their dangers: and as we sometimes see in our gardens written on a board in great letters, BEWARE OF SPRING GUNS—MAN TRAPS ARE SET HERE; so had this king caused to be written and stuck up before the eyes of the travellers, several little notices and cautions; such as, 'Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction.—'Take heed, lest ye also perish.'—'Wo to them that rise up early to drink wine.'—'The pleasures of sin are but for a season,' &c. Such were the notices directed to the *broad-way* travellers; but they were so busily engaged in plucking the flowers, sometimes before they were blown, and in devouring the fruits often before they were ripe, and in loading themselves with *yellow clay*, under the weight of which millions perished, that they had no time so much as to look at the king's directions. Many went wrong because they preferred a merry journey to a safe one, and because they were terrified by certain notices chiefly intended for the *narrow-way* travellers; such as, 'ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice:' but had these foolish people allowed themselves time, or patience to read to the end, which they seldom would do, they would have seen these comfortable words added, 'But your sorrow shall be turned into joy;' also, 'your joy no man taketh from you;' and, 'they that sow in tears shall reap in joy.'

Now, I also saw in my dream, that many travellers who had a strong dread of ending at the *Land of Misery* walked up to the *Strait Gate*, hoping that though the entrance was narrow, yet if they could once get in, the road would widen; but what was their grief, when on looking more closely they saw written on the inside, 'Narrow is the way;' this made them take fright; they compared the inscriptions with which the whole way was lined, such as, 'Be ye not conformed to this world; deny yourselves, take up your cross,' with all the tempting pleasures of the wilderness. Some indeed recollected the fine descriptions they had read of the *Happy Land*, the *Golden City*, and the *Rivers of Pleasure*, and they sighed: but then those joys were distant, and from the faintness of their light, they soon got to think that what was remote might be uncertain, and while the present good increased in bulk the distant good receded, diminished, disappeared. Their faith failed; they would trust no farther than they could see; they drew back and got into the *Broad Way*, taking a common but sad refuge in the number, the fashion, and the gayety of their companions. When these faint-hearted people, who yet had set out well, turned back, their light was quite put out, and then they became worse than those who had made no attempt to get in. 'For it is impossible, that is, it is next to impossible, for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance.'

A few honest humble travellers not naturally stronger than the rest, but strengthened by their trust in the king's word, came up, by the light of their lamps, and meekly entered in at the *Strait Gate*. As they advanced farther they felt less heavy, and though the way did not in reality grow wider, yet they grew reconciled to the narrowness of it, especially when they saw the walls here and there studded with certain jewels called *promises*, such as: 'He that endureth to the end shall be saved;' and 'my grace is sufficient for you.' Some, when they were almost ready to faint, were encouraged by seeing that many niches in the *Narrow Way* were filled with statues and pictures of saints and martyrs, who had borne their testimony at the stake, that the *Narrow Way* was the safe way; and these travellers, instead of sinking at the sight of the painted wheel and gibbet, the sword and furnace, were animated with these words written under them, 'Those that wear white robes, came out of great tribulation,' and 'be ye followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.'

In the mean time there came a great multitude of travellers all from Laodicea; this was the largest party I had yet seen; these were *neither hot nor cold;* they would not give up future hope, and they could not endure present pain. So they contrived to deceive themselves, by fancying that though they resolved to keep the *Happy Land* in view, yet there must needs be many different ways which lead to it, no doubt all equally sure, without all being equally rough; so they set on foot certain little contrivances to attain the end without using the means, and softened down the spirit of the king's directions to fit them to their own practice. Sometimes they would split a direction in two, and only use that half which suited them. For instance when they met with the following rule on the way-post, 'Trust in the Lord and be doing good,' they would take the first half, and make themselves easy with a general sort of trust, that through the mercy of the king all would go well with them, though they themselves did nothing. And on the other hand, many made sure that a few good works of their own would do their business, and carry them safely to the *Happy Land*, though they did *not* trust in the Lord, nor place any faith in his word. So they took the second half of the spliced direction. Thus some perished by a lazy faith, and others by a working pride.

A large party of Pharisees now appeared, who had so neglected their lamp that they did not see their way at all, though they fancied them-

selves to be full of light; they kept up appearances so well as to delude others, and most effectually to delude themselves, with a notion that they might be found in the right way at last. In this dreadful delusion they went on to the end, and till they were finally plunged in the dark valley, never discovered the horrors which awaited them on the dismal shore. It was remarkable that while these Pharisees were often boasting how bright their light burnt, in order to get the praise of men, the humble travellers, whose steady light showed their good works to others, refused all commendation, and the brighter their light shined before men, so much the more they insisted that they ought to glorify not themselves, but their Father which is in heaven.

I now set myself to observe what was the particular let, molestation and hindrance which obstructed particular travellers in their endeavours to enter in at the *Strait Gate*. I remarked a huge portly man who seemed desirous of getting in, but he carried about him such a vast provision of bags full of gold, and had on so many rich garments, which stuffed him out so wide, that though he pushed and squeezed, like one who had really a mind to get in, yet he could not possibly do so. Then I heard a voice crying, 'Wo to him who loadeth himself with thick clay.' The poor man felt something was wrong, and even went so far as to change some of his more cumbersome vanities into others which seemed less bulky, but still he and his pack were much too wide for the gate. He would not however give up the matter so easily, but began to throw away a little of the coarser part of his baggage, but still I remarked that he threw away none of the vanities which lay near his heart. He tried again, but it would not do; still his dimensions were too large. He now looked up and read these words, 'How hardly shall those who have riches enter into the kingdom of God.' The poor man sighed to find that it was impossible to enjoy his fill of both worlds, and 'went away sorrowing.' If he ever afterwards cast a thought towards the *Happy Land*, it was only to regret that the road which led to it was too narrow to admit any but the meagre children of want, who were not so encumbered by wealth as to be too big for the passage. Had he read on, he would have seen that 'with God all things are possible.'

Another advanced with much confidence of success, for having little worldly riches or honours, the gate did not seem so strait to him. He got to the threshold triumphantly, and seemed to look back with disdain on all that he was quitting. He soon found, however, that he was so bloated with pride, and stuffed out with self-sufficiency, that he could not get in. Nay, he was in a worse way than the rich man just named: for *he* had been willing to throw away some of his outward luggage, whereas this man refused to part with a grain of that vanity and self-applause which made him too large for the way. The sense of his own worth so swelled him out that he stuck fast in the gateway, and could neither get in nor out. Finding now that he must cut off all those big thoughts of himself, if he wished to be reduced to such a size as to pass the gate, he gave up all thoughts of it. He scorned that humility and self-denial which might have shrunk him down to the proper dimensions; the more he insisted on his own qualifications for entrance, the more impossible it became to enter, for the bigger he grew. Finding that he must become quite another manner of man before he could hope to get in, he gave up the desire; and I now saw that though when he set his face towards the *Happy Land* he could not get an inch forward, yet the instant he made a motion to turn back into the world, his speed became rapid enough, and he got back into the *Broad Way* much sooner than he got out of it.

Many, who for a time were brought down from their usual bulk by some affliction, seemed to get in with ease. They now thought all their difficulties over, for having been surfeited with the world during their late disappointment, they turned their backs upon it willingly enough, and fancied they were tired of it. A fit of sickness, perhaps, which is very apt to *reduce*, had for a time brought their bodies into subjection, so that they were enabled just to get in at the gateway; but as soon as health and spirits returned, the way grew narrower and narrower to them; and they could not get on, but turned short, and got back into the world. I saw many attempt to enter who were stopped short by a large burthen of *worldly cares*; others by a load of *idolatrous attachments*; but I observed that nothing proved a more complete bar than that vast *bundle of prejudices* with which multitudes were loaded. —Other were fatally obstructed by loads of *bad habits* which they would not lay down, though they knew it prevented their entrance.

Some few, however, of most descriptions, who had kept their *light* alive by craving constant supplies from the king's treasury, got through at last by a strength which they felt not to be their own. One poor man, who carried the largest bundle of bad habits I had seen, could not get on a step; he never ceased, however, to implore for light enough to see where his misery lay; he threw down one of his bundles, then another, but all to little purpose; still he could not stir. At last *striving as if in agony* (which is the true way of entering) he threw down the the heaviest article in his pack; this was *selfishness:* the poor fellow felt relieved at once, his light burned brightly, and the rest of his pack was as nothing.

Then I heard a great noise as of carpenters at work. I looked what this might be, and saw many sturdy travellers, who finding they were too bulky to get through, took it into their heads not to reduce themselves, but to widen the gate; they hacked on this side, and hewed on that; but all their hacking and hewing, and hammering was to no purpose, they got their labour for their pains. It would have been possible for them to have reduced themselves, had they attempted it, but to widen the narrow way was impossible.

What grieved me most was to observe that many who had got on successfully a good way, now stopped to rest and to admire their own progress. While they were thus valuing themselves on their attainments, their light diminished. While these were boasting how far they had

left others behind who had set out much earlier, some slower travellers whose beginning had not been so promising, but who had walked meekly and circumspectly, now outstripped them.—These last walked not as though they had already attained; but this one thing they did, forgetting the things which were behind, they pushed forward to the mark, for the prize of their high calling. These, though naturally weak, yet *by laying aside every weight, finished the race that was before them.* Those who had kept their 'light burning,' who were not 'wise in their own conceit,' who 'laid their help on one that is mighty,' who had chosen to suffer affliction rather than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season,' came at length to the *Happy Land.*—They had indeed the *Dark and Shadowy Valley* to cross, but even there they found a ***rod and a staff*** to comfort them. Their light instead of being put out by the damps of the Valley and of the Shadow of Death, often burnt with added brightness. Some indeed suffered the terrors of a short eclipse; but even then their light, like that of a dark lantern, was not put out; it was only turned for a while from him who carried it, and even these often finished their course with joy.—But be that as it might, the instant they reached the *Happy Land,* all tears were wiped from their eyes, and the king himself came forth and welcomed them into his presence, and put a crown upon their heads, with these words, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy lord.'

PARLEY, THE PORTER.

AN ALLEGORY:

Showing how robbers without can never get into a house, unless there are traitors within.

THERE was once a certain nobleman who had a house or castle situated in the midst of a great wilderness, but inclosed in a garden. Now there was a band of robbers in the wilderness who had a great mind to plunder and destroy the castle, but they had not succeeded in their endeavours, because the master had given strict orders to '*watch without ceasing.*' To quicken their vigilance he used to tell them that their care would soon have an end; that though the nights they had to watch were dark and stormy, yet they were but few; the period of resistance was short, that of rest would be eternal.

The robbers, however, attacked the castle in various ways. They tried at every avenue, watched to take advantage of every careless moment; looked for an open door or a neglected window. But though they often made the bolts shake and the windows rattle, they could never greatly hurt the house, much less get into it. Do you know the reason? it was because the servants were never off their guard. They heard the noises plain enough, and used to be not a little frightened, for they were aware both of the strength and perseverance of their enemies. But what seemed rather odd to some of these servants, the lord used to tell them, that while they continued to be afraid they would be safe; and it passed into a sort of proverb in that family 'Happy is he that feareth always.' Some of the servants, however, thought this a contradiction.

One day, when the master was going from home, he called his servants all together, and spoke to them as follows: 'I will not repeat to you the directions I have so often given you; they are all written down in THE BOOK OF LAWS, of which every one of you has a copy. Remember, it is a very short time that you are to remain in this castle; you will soon remove to my more settled habitation, to a more durable house, not made with hands. As that house is never exposed to any attack, so it never stands in need of any repair; for that country is never infested by any sons of violence. Here you are servants; there you will be princes. But mark my words, and you will find the same in THE BOOK OF MY LAWS, whether you will ever attain to *that* house, will depend on the manner in which you defend yourselves in *this.* A stout vigilance for a short time will secure your certain happiness for ever. But every thing depends on your present exertions. Don't complain and take advantage of my absence, and call me a hard master, and grumble that you are placed in the midst of an howling wilderness without peace or security. Say not, that you are exposed to temptations without any power to resist them. You have some difficulties, it is true, but you have many helps and many comforts to make this house tolerable, even before you get to the other. Your's is not a hard service; and if it were, 'the time is short.' You have arms if you will use them, and doors if you will bar them, and strength if you will use it. I would defy all the attacks of the robbers without, if I could depend on the fidelity of the people within. If the thieves ever get in and destroy the house, it must be by the connivance of one of the family. *For it is a standing law of this castle, that mere outward attack can never destroy it, if there be no consenting traitor within.* You will stand or fall as you will observe this rule. If you are finally happy, it will be by my grace and favour; if you are ruined, it will be your own fault.'

When the nobleman had done speaking, every servant repeated his assurance of attachment and firm allegiance to his master. But among them all, not one was so vehement and loud in his professions as old Parley the porter. Parley, indeed, it was well known, was always talking, which exposed him to no small danger; for as he was the foremost to promise, so he was the slackest to perform: and, to speak the truth, though he was a civil spoken fellow, his lord was more afraid of him, with all his professions, than he was of the rest who protested less. He knew that Parley was vain, credulous, and self-suffi

cient; and he always apprehended more danger from Parley's impertinence, curiosity, and love of novelty, than even from the stronger vices of some of his other servants. The rest indeed, seldom got into any scrape, of which Parley was not the cause in some shape or other.

I am sorry to be obliged to confess, that though Parley was allowed every refreshment, and all the needful rest which the nature of his place permitted, yet he thought it very hard to be forced to be so constantly on duty. 'Nothing but watching,' said Parley. 'I have, to be sure, many pleasures, and meat sufficient; and plenty of chat, in virtue of my office, and I pick up a good deal of news of the comers and goers by day, but it is hard that at night I must watch as narrowly as a house-dog, and yet let in no company without orders; only because there is said to be a few straggling *robbers* here in the wilderness, with whom my master does not care to let us be acquainted. He pretends to make us vigilant through fear of the robbers, but I suspect it is only to make us mope alone. A merry companion and a mug of beer would make the night pass cheerily.' Parley, however, kept all these thoughts to himself, or uttered them only when no one heard, for talk he must. He began to listen to the nightly whistling of the robbers under the windows with rather less alarm than formerly, and was sometimes so tired of watching, that he thought it was even better to run the risk of being robbed once, than to live always in the fear of robbers.

There was certain bounds in which the lord allowed his servants to walk and divert themselves at all proper seasons. A pleasant garden surrounded the castle, and a thick hedge separated this garden from the wilderness, which was infested by the robbers; in this garden they were permitted to amuse themselves. The master advised them always to keep within these bounds. 'While you observe this rule,' said he, 'you will be safe and well; and you will consult your own safety and happiness, as well as show your love to me, by not venturing over to the extremity of your bounds; he who goes as far as he dares, always shows a wish to go farther than he ought, and commonly does so.'

It was remarkable, that the nearer these servants kept to the castle, and the farther from the *hedge*, the more ugly the wilderness appeared. And the nearer they approached the forbidden bounds, their own home appeared more dull, and the wilderness more delightful. And this the master knew when he gave his orders; for he never either did or said any thing without a good reason. And when his servants sometimes desired an explanation of the reason, he used to tell them they would understand it when they came to *the other house;* for it was one of the pleasures of that house, that it would explain all the mysteries of this, and any little obscurities in the master's conduct would be then made quite plain.

Parley was the first who promised to keep clear of the *hedge*, and yet was often seen looking as near as he durst. One day he ventured close up to the hedge, put two or three stones one on another, and tried to peep over. He saw one of the robbers strolling as near as he could be on the forbidden side. This man's name was Mr. Flatterwell, a smooth civil man, 'whose words were softer than butter, having war in his heart.' He made several low bows to Parley.

Now, Parley knew so little of the world, that he actually concluded all robbers must have an ugly look which should frighten you at once, and coarse brutal manners which would at first sight show they were enemies. He thought, like a poor ignorant fellow as he was, that this mild specious person could never be one of the band. Flatterwell accosted Parley with the utmost civility, which put him quite off his guard; for Parley had no notion that he could be an enemy who was so soft and civil. For an open foe he would have been prepared. Parley, however, after a little discourse drew this conclusion, that either Mr. Flatterwell could not be one of the gang, or that if he was, the robbers themselves could not be such monsters as his master had described, and therefore it was a folly to be afraid of them.

Flatterwell began, like a true adept in his art, by lulling all Parley's suspicions asleep; and instead of openly abusing his master, which would have opened Parley's eyes at once, he pretended rather to commend him in a general way, as a person who meant well himself, but was too apt to suspect others. To this Parley assented. The other then ventured to hint by degrees, that though the nobleman might be a good master in the main, yet he must say he was a little strict, and a little stingy, and not a little censorious. That he was blamed by the *gentlemen of the wilderness* for shutting his house against good company, and his servants were laughed at by people of spirit for submitting to the gloomy life of the castle, and the insipid pleasures of the garden, instead of ranging in the wilderness at large.

'It is true enough,' said Parley, who was generally of the opinion of the person he was talking with, 'My master *is* rather harsh and close. But to own the truth, all the barring, and locking, and bolting, is to keep out a set of gentlemen, who he assures us are *robbers*, and who are waiting for an opportunity to destroy us. I hope no offence, sir, but by your livery I suspect you, sir, are one of the gang he is so much afraid of.'

Flatterwell. Afraid of me? Impossible dear Mr. Parley. You see, I do not look like an enemy. I am unarmed; what harm can a plain man like me do?

Parley. Why, that is true enough. Yet my master says, if we were to let you into the house, we should be ruined soul and body.

Flatterwell. I am sorry Mr. Parley to hear so sensible a man as you are so deceived. This is mere prejudice. He knows we are cheerful entertaining people, foes to gloom and superstition, and therefore he is so morose he will not let you get acquainted with us.

Parley. Well; he says you are a band of thieves, gamblers, murderers, drunkards, and atheists.

Flatterwell. Don't believe him; the worst we should do, perhaps, is, we might drink a friendly glass with you to your master's health

or play an innocent game of cards just to keep you awake, or sing a cheerful song with the maids; now is there any harm in all this?

Parley. Not the least in the world. And I begin to think there is not a word of truth in all my master says.

Flatterwell. The more you know us, the more you will like us. But I wish there was not this ugly hedge between us. I have a great deal to say, and I am afraid of being overheard.

Parley was now just going to give a spring over the hedge, but checked himself, saying, 'I dare not come on your side, there are people about, and every thing is carried to my master.' Flatterwell saw by this that his new friend was kept on his own side of the hedge by fear rather than by principle, and from that moment he made sure of him. 'Dear Mr. Parley,' said he, 'if you will allow me the honour of a little conversation with you, I will call under the window of your lodge this evening. I have something to tell you greatly to your advantage. I admire you exceedingly. I long for your friendship; our whole brotherhood is ambitious of being known to so amiable a person.'—'O dear,' said Parley, 'I shall be afraid of talking to you at night. It is so against my master's orders. But did you say you had something to tell me to my advantage?'

Flatterwell. Yes, I can point out to you how you may be a richer, a merrier, and a happier man. If you will admit me to-night under the window, I will convince you that it is prejudice and not wisdom, which makes your master bar his door against us; I will convince you that the mischief of a *robber*, as your master scurrilously calls us, is only in the name; that we are your true friends, and only mean to promote your happiness.

'Don't say *we*,' said Parley, 'pray come alone; I would not see the rest of the gang for the world; but I think there can be no great harm in talking to *you* through the bars, if you come alone; but I am determined not to let you in. Yet I can't say but I wish to know what you can tell me so much to my advantage; indeed, if it is for my good I ought to know it.'

Flatterwell. (going out, turns back.) Dear Mr. Parley, there is one thing I had forgotten. I cannot get over the hedge at night without assistance. You know there is a secret in the nature of that hedge; you in the house may get over it into the wilderness of your own accord, but we cannot get to your side by our own strength. You must look about to see where the hedge is thinnest, and then set to work to clear away here and there a little bough for me, it won't be missed; and if there is but the smallest hole made on your side, those on ours can get through; otherwise we do but labour in vain. To this Parley made some objection, through the fear of being seen. Flatterwell replied, that the smallest hole from within would be sufficient, for he could then work his own way. 'Well,' said Parley, 'I will consider of it. To be su'e I shall even then be equally safe in the castle, as I shall have all the bolts, bars, and locks between us, so it will make but little difference.'

'Certainly not,' said Flatterwell, who knew it would make all the difference in the world. So they parted with mutual protestations of regard. Parley went home charmed with his new friend. His eyes were now clearly opened as to his master's prejudices against the *robbers*, and he was convinced there was more in the name than in the thing. 'But,' said he, 'though Mr. Flatterwell is certainly an agreeable companion, he may not be so safe an inmate. There can, however, be no harm in talking at a distance, and I certainly won't let him in.'

Parley, in the course of the day, did not forget his promise to thin the hedge of separation a little. At first he only tore off a handful of leaves, then a little sprig, then he broke away a bough or two. It was observable, the larger the breach became, the worse he began to think of his master, and the better of himself. Every peep he took through the broken hedge increased his desire to get out into the wilderness, and made the thoughts of the castle more irksome to him.

He was continually repeating to himself, 'I wonder what Mr. Flatterwell can have to say so much to my advantage? I see he does not wish to hurt my master, he only wishes to serve me.' As the hour of meeting, however, drew near, the master's orders now and then came across Parley's thoughts. So to divert them, he took up THE BOOK. He happened to open it at those words: 'My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.' For a moment his heart failed him. 'If this admonition should be sent on purpose?' said he; 'but no, 'tis a bugbear. My master told me that if I went to the bounds I should get over the hedge. Now I went to the utmost limits, and did *not* get over.' Here conscience put in; 'Yes, but it was because you were watched.'—'I am sure,' continued Parley, 'one may always stop where one will, and this is only a trick of my master's to spoil sport. So I will even hear what Mr. Flatterwell has to say so much to my advantage. I am not obliged to follow his counsels, but there can be no harm in hearing them.'

Flatterwell prevailed on the rest of the robbers to make no public attack on the castle that night. 'My brethren,' said he, 'you now and then fail in your schemes, because you are for violent beginnings, while my smoothing insinuating measures hardly ever miss. You come blustering and roaring, and frighten people, and set them on their guard. You inspire them with terror of *you*, while my whole scheme is to make them think well of *themselves*, and ill of their master. If I once get them to entertain hard thoughts of him, and high thoughts of themselves, my business is done, and they fall plump into my snares. So let this delicate affair alone to me: Parley is a softly fellow; he must not be frightened, but cajoled. He is the very sort of a man to succeed with; and worth a hundred of your sturdy sensible fellows. With them we want strong arguments and strong temptations; but with such fellows as Parley, in whom vanity and sensuality are the leading qualities (as, let me tell you, is the case with far the greater part) flattery and a promise of ease and pleasure, will do more than your

whole battle array. If you will let me manage, I will get you all into the castle before midnight.'

At night the castle was barricadoed as usual, and no one had observed the hole which Parley had made in the hedge. This oversight arose that night from the servants' neglecting one of the master's standing orders—to make a nightly examination of the state of things. The neglect did not proceed so much from wilful disobedience, as from having passed the evening in sloth and diversion, which often amounts to nearly the same in its consequences.

As all was very cheerful within, so all was very quiet without. And before they went to bed, some of the servants observed to the rest, that as they heard no robbers that night, they thought they might now begin to remit something of their diligence in bolting and barring: that all this fastening and locking was very troublesome, and they hoped the danger was now pretty well over. It was rather remarkable, that they never made these sort of observations, but after an evening of some excess, and when they had neglected their *private business with their master*. All, however, except Parley, went quietly to bed, and seemed to feel uncommon security.

Parley crept down to his lodge. He had half a mind to go to bed too. Yet he was not willing to disappoint Mr. Flatterwell. So civil a gentleman! To be sure he might have had bad designs. Yet what right had he to suspect any body who made such professions, and who was so very civil? 'Besides, it is something for my advantage,' added Parley. 'I will not open the door, that is certain; but as he is to come alone, he can do me no harm through the bars of the windows: and he will think I am a coward if I don't keep my word. No, I will let him see that I am not afraid of my own strength; I will show him I can go what length I please, and stop short *when* I please.' Had Flatterwell heard this boastful speech, he would have been quite sure of his man.

About eleven, Parley heard the signal agreed upon. It was so gentle as to cause little alarm. So much the worse. Flatterwell never frightened any one, and therefore seldom failed of any one. Parley stole softly down, planted himself at his little window, opened the casement, and spied his new friend. It was pale starlight. Parley was a little frightened; for he thought he perceived one or two persons behind Flatterwell; but the other assured him it was only his own shadow, which his fears had magnified into a company. 'Though I assure you,' said he, 'I have not a friend but what is as harmless as myself.'

They now entered into serious discourse, in which Flatterwell showed himself a deep politician. He skilfully mixed up in his conversation a proper proportion of praise on the pleasures of the wilderness, of compliments to Parley, of ridicule on his master, and of abusive sneers on the BOOK in which the master's laws were written. Against this last he had always a particular spite, for he considered it as the grand instrument by which the lord maintained his servants in their allegiance; and when they could once be brought to sneer at the BOOK, there was an end of submission to the lord. Parley had not penetration enough to see his drift. 'As to the BOOK, Mr. Flatterwell,' said he, 'I do not know whether it be true or false. I rather neglect than disbelieve it. I am forced, indeed, to hear it read once a week, but I never look into it myself, if I can help it.'—'Excellent,' said Flatterwell to himself, 'that is just the same thing. This is safe ground for me. For whether a man does not believe in the BOOK, or does not attend to it, it comes pretty much to the same, and I generally get him at last.'

'Why cannot we be a little nearer, Mr. Parley,' said Flatterwell; 'I am afraid of being overheard by some of your master's spies. The window from which you speak is so high; I wish you would come down to the door.'—'Well,' said Parley, 'I see no great harm in that. There is a little wicket in the door through which we may converse with more ease and equal safety. The same fastenings will be still between us.' So down he went, but not without a degree of fear and trembling.

The little wicket being now opened, and Flatterwell standing close on the outside of the door, they conversed with great ease. 'Mr. Parley,' said Flatterwell, 'I should not have pressed you so much to admit me into the castle, but out of pure disinterested regard to your own happiness. I shall get nothing by it, but I cannot bear to think that a person so wise and amiable should be shut up in this gloomy dungeon, under a hard master, and a slave to the unreasonable tyranny of his BOOK OF LAWS. If you admit me, you need have no more waking, no more watching.' Here Parley involuntarily slipped back the bolt of the door. 'To convince you of my true love,' continued Flatterwell, 'I have brought a bottle of the most delicious wine that grows in the wilderness. You shall taste it, but you must put a glass through the wicket to receive it, for it is a singular property in this wine, that we of the wilderness cannot succeed in conveying it to you of the castle, without you hold out a vessel to receive it.'—'O here is a glass,' said Parley, holding out a large goblet, which he always kept ready to be filled by any chance-comer. The other immediately poured into the capacious goblet a large draught of that delicious intoxicating liquor, with which the family of the Flatterwells have for near six thousand years gained the hearts, and destroyed the souls of all the inhabitants of the castle, whenever they have been able to prevail on them to hold out a hand to receive it. This the wise master of the castle well knew would be the case, for he knew what was in men; he knew their propensity to receive the delicious poison of the Flatterwells; and it was for this reason that he gave them THE BOOK of his laws, and planted the hedge and invented the bolts, and doubled the lock.

As soon as poor Parley had swallowed the fatal draught, it acted like enchantment. He at once lost all power of resistance. He had no sense of fear left. He despised his own safety, forgot his master, lost all sight of the house in the other country, and reached out for another draught as eagerly as Flatterwell held out the

bottle to administer it. 'What a fool, have I been,' said Parley, 'to deny myself so long!'—'Will you now let me in?' said Flatterwell. 'Ay, that I will,' said the deluded Parley. Though the train was now increased to near a hundred robbers, yet so intoxicated was Parley, that he did not see one of them except his new friend. Parley eagerly pulled down the bars, drew back the bolts and forced open the locks; thinking he could never let in his friend soon enough. He had, however, just presence of mind to say, 'My dear friend, I hope you are alone.' Flatterwell swore he was—Parley opened the door—in rushed, not Flatterwell only, but the whole banditti, who always lurked behind in his train. The moment they had got sure possession, Flatterwell changed his soft tone, and cried in a voice of thunder, 'Down with the castle—kill, burn, and destroy.'

Rapine, murder, and conflagration, by turns took place. Parley was the very first whom they attacked. He was overpowered with wounds. As he fell he cried out, 'O my master, I die a victim to my unbelief in thee, and to my own vanity and imprudence. O that the guardians of all other castles would hear me with my dying breath repeat my master's admonition, that *all attacks from without will not destroy unless there is some confederate within.* O that the keepers of all other castles would learn from my ruin, that he who parleys with temptation is already undone. That he who allows himself to go to the very bounds will soon jump over the hedge; that he who talks out of the window with the enemy, will soon open the door to him; that he who holds out his hand for the cup of sinful flattery, loses all power of resisting; that when he opens the door to one sin, all the rest fly in upon him, and the man perishes as I now do.'

TALES

FOR THE COMMON PEOPLE.

Religion is for the man in humble life, and to raise his nature, and to put him in mind of a state in which the privileges of opulence will cease, when he will be equal by nature, and may be more than equal by virtue.—*Burke on the French Revolution.*



ADVERTISEMENT

TO THESE AND THE PRECEDING TALES.

To improve the habits, and raise the principles of the common people, at a time when their dangers and temptations, moral and political, were multiplied beyond the example of any former period, was the motive which impelled the author of these volumes to devise and prosecute the institution of the Cheap Repository. This plan was established with an humble wish not only to counteract vice and profligacy on the one hand, but error, discontent, and false religion on the other. And as an appetite for reading had, from a variety of causes, been increased among the inferior ranks in this country, it was judged expedient, at this critical period, to supply such wholesome aliment as might give a new direction to their taste, and abate their relish for those corrupt and inflammatory publications which the consequences of the French Revolution have been so fatally pouring in upon us.

The success of the plan exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its projector. Above two millions of the tracts were sold within the first year, besides very large numbers in Ireland; and they continue to be very extensively circulated, in their original form of single tracts, by Evans, in Long-lane, West Smithfield, Hatchard in Piccadilly, and Hazard in Bath, as well as in three bound volumes, sold by Rivington, Hatchard, and all other booksellers.

As these stories, though *principally*, are not calculated *exclusively* for the middle and lower classes of society, the author has, at the desire of her friends, selected those which were written by herself, and presented them to the public in this collection of her works, in an enlarged and improved form.

THE SHEPHERD OF SALISBURY PLAIN.

Mr. Johnson, a very worthy charitab'e gentleman, was travelling some time ago across one of those vast plains which are well known in Wiltshire. It was a fine summer's evening, and he rode slowly that he might have leisure to admire God in the works of his creation. For this gentleman was of opinion, that a walk or a ride was as proper a time as any to think about good things; for which reason, on such occasions, he seldom thought so much about his money, or his trade, or public news, as at other times, that he might with more ease and satis

faction enjoy the pious thought which the wonderful works of the great Maker of heaven and earth are intended to raise in the mind.

As this serene contemplation of the visible heavens insensibly lifted up his mind from the works of God in nature, to the same God as he is seen in Revelation, it occurred to him that this very connexion was clearly intimated by the Royal Prophet in the nineteenth Psalm.—That most beautiful description of the greatness and power of God exhibited in the former part, plainly seeming intended to introduce, illustrate, and unfold the operations of the word and Spirit of God on the heart in the latter. And he began to run a parallel in his own mind between the effects of that highly poetical and glowing picture of the material sun in searching and warming the earth, in the first six verses, and the spiritual operation attributed to the 'law of God,' which fills up the remaining part of the Psalm. And he persuaded himself that the divine Spirit which dictated this fine hymn, had left it as a kind of general intimation to what use we were to convert our admiration of created things; namely, that we might be led by a sight of them to raise our views from the kingdom of nature to that of grace, and that the contemplation of God in his works might draw us to contemplate him in his word.

In the midst of these reflections, Mr. Johnson's attention was all of a sudden called off by the barking of a shepherd's dog, and looking up he spied one of those little huts, which are here and there to be seen on those great downs; and near it was the shepherd himself busily employed with his dog in collecting together his vast flock of sheep. As he drew nearer, he perceived him to be a clean, well-looking, poor man, near fifty years of age. His coat, though at first it had probably been of one dark colour, had been in a long course of years so often patched with different sorts of cloth, that it was now become hard to say which had been the original colour. But this, while it gave a plain proof of the shepherd's poverty, equally proved the exceeding neatness, industry and good management of his wife. His stockings no less proved her good house-wifery, for they were entirely covered with darns of different coloured worsted, but had not a hole in them; and his shirt, though nearly as coarse as the sails of a ship, was as white as the drifted snow, and was neatly mended where time had either made a rent, or worn it thin. This furnishes a rule of judging, by which one shall seldom be deceived. If I meet with a labourer, hedging, ditching, or mending the highways, with his stockings and shirt tight and whole, however mean and bad his other garments are, I have seldom failed, on visiting his cottage, to find that also clean and well ordered, and his wife notable, and worthy of encouragement. Whereas a poor woman, who will be lying a-bed, or gossiping with her neighbours when she ought to be fitting out her husband in a cleanly manner, will seldom be found to be very good in other respects.

This was not the case with our shepherd: and Mr. Johnson was not more struck with the decency of his mean and frugal dress, than with his open honest countenance, which bore strong marks of health, cheerfulness, and spirit.

Mr. Johnson, who was on a journey, and somewhat fearful from the appearance of the sky, that rain was at no great distance, accosted the shepherd with asking what sort of weather he thought it would be on the morrow. 'It will be such weather as pleases me,' answered the shepherd. Though the answer was delivered in the mildest and most civil tone that could be imagined, the gentleman thought the words themselves rather rude and surly, and asked him how that could be. 'Because,' replied the shepherd, 'it will be such weather as shall please God, and whatever pleases him always pleases me.'

Mr. Johnson, who delighted in good men and good things, was very well satisfied with his reply. For he justly thought that though a hypocrite may easily contrive to appear better than he really is to a stranger; and that no one should be too soon trusted, merely for having a few good words in his mouth; yet as he knew that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; he always accustomed himself to judge favorably of those who had a serious deportment and solid manner of speaking. It looks as if it proceeded from a good habit, said he, and though I may now and then be deceived by it, yet it has not often happened to me to be so. Whereas if a man accosts me with an idle, dissolute, vulgar, indecent, or profane expression, I have never been deceived in him, but have generally on inquiry found his character to be as bad as his language gave me room to expect.

He entered into conversation with the shepherd in the following manner: 'Your's is a troublesome life, honest friend,' said he. 'To be sure, sir,' replied the shepherd, ''tis not a very lazy life; but 'tis not near so toilsome as that which my Great Master led for my sake; and he had every state and condition of life at his choice, and *chose* a hard one; while I only submit to the lot that is appointed to me.' 'You are exposed to great cold and heat,' said the gentleman: 'True, sir,' said the shepherd; 'but then I am not exposed to great temptations; and so throwing one thing against another, God is pleased to contrive to make things more equal than we poor, ignorant, short-sighted creatures, are apt to think. David was happier when he kept his father's sheep on such a plain as this, and employed in singing some of his own Psalms perhaps, than ever he was when he became king of Israel and Judah. And I dare say we should never have had some of the most beautiful texts in all those fine Psalms, if he had not been a shepherd, which enabled him to make so many fine comparisons and similitudes, as one may say, from country life, flocks of sheep, hills, and vallies, fields of corn, and fountains of water.'

'You think then,' said the gentleman, 'that a laborious life is a happy one.' 'I do, sir; and more so especially, as it exposes a man to fewer sins. If king Saul had continued a poor laborious man to the end of his days, he might have lived happy and honest, and died a natural death in his bed at last, which you know, sir was

more than he did. But I speak with reverence, for it was divine Providence overruled all that, you know sir, and I do not presume to make comparisons.—Besides, sir, my employment has been particularly honoured—Moses was a shepherd in the plains of Midian. It was to "shepherds keeping their flocks by night," that the angels appeared in Bethlehem, to tell the best news, the gladdest tidings, that ever were revealed to poor sinful men; often and often has the thought warmed my poor heart in the coldest night, and filled me with more joy and thankfulness than the best supper could have done.'

Here the shepherd stopped, for he began to feel that he had made too free, and talked too long. But Mr. Johnson was so well pleased with what he said, and with the cheerful contented manner in which he said it, that he desired him to go on freely, for that it was a pleasure to him to meet with a plain man, who, without any kind of learning but what he had got from the Bible, was able to talk so well on a subject in which all men, high and low, rich and poor, are equally concerned.

'Indeed I am afraid I make too bold, sir, for it better becomes me to listen to such a gentleman as you seem to be, than to talk in my poor way: but as I was saying, sir, I wonder all working men do not derive as great joy and delight as I do from thinking how God has honoured poverty! Oh! sir, what great, or rich, or mighty men have had such honour put on them, or their condition, as shepherds, tentmakers, fishermen, and carpenters have had? Besides, it seems as if God honoured industry also. The way of duty is not only the way of safety, but it is remarkable how many in the exercise of the common duties of their calling, humbly and rightly performed, as we may suppose, have found honours, preferment, and blessing: while it does not occur to me that the whole sacred volume presents a single instance of a like blessing conferred on idleness. Rebekah, Rachel, and Jethro's daughters, were diligently employed in the lowest occupations of a country life, when Providence, by means of those very occupations, raised them up husbands so famous in history, as Isaac, Jacob, and the prophet Moses. The shepherds were neither playing nor sleeping, but "watching their flocks," when they received the news of a Saviour's birth: and the woman of Samaria, by the laborious office of drawing water, was brought to the knowledge of Him who gave her to drink of "living water."

'My honest friend,' said the gentleman, 'I perceive you are well acquainted with scripture.'—'Yes, sir, pretty well, blessed be God! through his mercy I learned to read when I was a little boy; though reading was not so common when I was a child, as I am told, through the goodness of Providence and the generosity of the rich, it is likely to become now-a-days. I believe there is no day for the last thirty years that I have not peeped at my Bible. If we can't find time to read a chapter, I defy any man to say he can't find time to read a verse: and a single text, sir, well followed, and put in practice every day, would make no bad figure at the year's end; three hundred and sixty-five texts, without the loss of a moment's time, would make a pretty stock, a little golden treasury, as one may say, from new-year's day to new-year's day; and if children were brought up to it, they would come to look for their text as naturally as they do for their breakfast. No labouring-man, 'tis true, has so much leisure as a shepherd, for while the flock is feeding I am obliged to be still, and at such times I can now and then tap a shoe for my children or myself, which is a great saving to us, and while I am doing that I repeat a chapter or a psalm, which makes the time pass pleasantly in this wild solitary place. I can say the best part of the New Testament by heart; I believe I should not say the best part, for every part is good, but I mean the greatest part. I have led but a lonely life, and have often had but little to eat, but my Bible, has been meat, drink, and company to me, as I may say, and when want and trouble have come upon me, I don't know what I should have done indeed, sir, if I had not had the promises of this book for my stay and support.'

'You have had great difficulties then?' said Mr. Johnson. 'Why, as to that, sir, not more than neighbours' fare; I have but little cause to complain, and much to be thankful; but I have had some little struggles, as I will leave you to judge. I have a wife and eight children, whom I bred up in that little cottage which you see under the hill, about half a mile off.' 'What, that with the smoke coming out of the chimney?' said the gentleman. 'O no, sir,' replied the shepherd, smiling, 'we have seldom smoke in the evening, for we have little to cook, and firing is very dear in these parts. 'Tis that cottage which you see on the left hand of the church, near that little tuft of hawthorns.'—'What, that hovel with only one room above and below, with scarcely any chimney? how is it possible that you can live there with such a family?' 'O it is very possible, and very certain too,' cried the shepherd. 'How many better men have been worse lodged! how many good Christians have perished in prisons and dungeons, in comparison of which my cottage is a palace! The house is very well, sir; and if the rain did not sometimes beat down upon us through the thatch when we are a-bed, I should not desire a better; for I have health, peace, and liberty, and no man maketh me afraid.'

'Well, I will certainly call on you before it be long; but how can you contrive to lodge so many children?' 'We do the best we can, sir. My poor wife is a very sickly woman; or we should always have done tolerably well. There are no gentry in the parish, so that she has not met with any great assistance in her sickness. The good curate of the parish, who lives in that pretty parsonage in the valley, is very willing, but not very able to assist us on these trying occasions, for he has little enough for himself, and a large family into the bargain. Yet he does what he can, and more than many other men do, and more than he can well afford. Besides that, his prayers and good advice we are always sure of, and we are truly thankful for that, for a man must give, you know, sir, according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not.'

'I am afraid,' said Mr. Johnson, 'that your difficulties may sometimes lead you to repine.'

'No, sir,' replied the shepherd, 'it pleases God to give me two ways of bearing up under them. I pray that they may be either removed or sanctified to me. Besides, if my road be right I am contented though it be rough and uneven. I do not so much stagger at hardships in the right way, as I dread a false security, and a hollow peace, while I may be walking in a more smoth, but less safe way. Besides, sir, I strengthen my faith by recollecting what the best men have suffered, and my hope, with the view of the shortness of all suffering. It is a good hint, sir, of the vanity of all earthly possessions, that though the whole Land of Promise was, his, yet the first bit of ground which Abraham, the father of the faithful, got possession of, in the land of Canaan, was a *grave*.

'Are you in any distress at present?' said Mr. Johnson. 'No, sir, thank God,' replied the shepherd. 'I get my shilling a-day, and most of my children will soon be able to earn something; for we have only three under five years old.'—'Only!' said the gentleman, 'that is a heavy burden.'—'Not at all; God fits the back to it. Though my wife is not able to do any out-of-door work, yet she breeds up our children to such habits of industry, that our little maids, before they are six years old, can first get a halfpenny, and then a penny a day by knitting. The boys, who are too little to do hard work, get a trifle by keeping the birds off the corn; for this the farmers will give them a penny or two pence, and now and then a bit of bread and cheese into the bargain. When the season of crow-keeping is over, then they glean or pick stones; any thing is better than idleness, sir, and if they did not get a farthing by it, I would make them do it just the same, for the sake of giving them early habits of labour.

'So you see, sir, I am not so badly off as many are; nay, if it were not that it costs me so much in 'pothecary's stuff for my poor wife, I should reckon myself well off, nay I do reckon myself well off; for blessed be God, he has granted her life to my prayers, and I would work myself to a 'natomy, and live on one meal a day, to add any comfort to her valuable life; indeed I have often done the last, and thought it no great matter neither.'

While they were in this part of the discourse, a fine plump cherry-cheek little girl ran up out breath, with a smile on her young happy face, and without taking any notice of the gentleman, cried out with great joy—'Look here, father, only see how much I have got!' Mr. Johnson was much struck with her simplicity, but puzzled to know what was the occasion of this great joy. On looking at her he perceived a small quantity of coarse wool, some of which had found its way through the holes of her clean, but scanty and ragged woollen apron. The father said, 'this has been a successful day indeed, Molly, but don't you see the gentleman?' Molly now made a curtesy down to the very ground; while Mr. Johnson inquired into the cause of mutual satisfaction which both father nd daughter had expressed, at the unusual good fortune of the day

'Sir,' said the shepherd, 'poverty is a great sharpener of the wits—My wife and I cannot endure to see our children (poor as they are,) without shoes and stockings, not only on account of the pinching cold which cramps their poor little limbs, but because it degrades and debases them; and poor people who have but little regard to appearances, will seldom be found to have any great regard for honesty and goodness; I don't say this is always the case; but I am sure it is so too often. Now shoes and stockings being very dear, we could never afford to get them without a little contrivance. I must show you how I manage about the shoes when you condescend to call at our cottage, sir; as to stockings, this is one way we take to help to get them. My young ones, who are too little to do much work, sometimes wander at odd hours over the hills for the chance of finding what little wool the sheep may drop when they rub themselves, as they are apt to do against the bushes.* These scattered bits of wool the children pick out of the brambles, which I see have torn sad holes in Molly's apron to-day; they carry this wool home, and when they have got a pretty parcel together, their mother cards it; for she can sit and card in the chimney corner, when she is not able to wash or work about house. The biggest girl then spins it; it does very well for us without dying, for poor people must not stand for the colour of their stockings. After this our little boys knit it for themselves, while they are employed in keeping cows in the fields, and after they get home at night. As for the knitting which the girls and their mother do, that is chiefly for sale, which helps to pay our rent.'

Mr. Johnson lifted up his eyes in silent astonishment, at the shifts which honest poverty can make rather than beg or steal; and was surprised to think how many ways of subsisting there are, which those who live at their ease little suspect. He secretly resolved to be more attentive to his own petty expenses than he had hitherto been; and to be more watchful that nothing was wasted in his family.

But to return to the shepherd. Mr. Johnson told him that as he must needs be at his friend's house, who lived many miles off, that night, he could not as he wished to do, make a visit to his cottage at present. 'But I will certainly do it,' said he, 'on my return, for I long to see your wife and her nice little family, and to be an eye-witness of her neatness and good management. The poor man's tears started into his eyes on hearing the commendation bestowed on his wife; and wiping them off with the sleeve of his coat; for he was not worth a handkerchief in the world, he said—'Oh, sir, you just now, I am afraid called me an humble man, but indeed I am a very proud one.'—'Proud!' exclaimed Mr. Johnson, 'I hope not—Pride is a great sin, and as the poor are liable to it as well as the rich, so good a man as you seem to be, ought to guard against it.'—'Sir,' said he, 'you are right, but I am not proud of myself, God knows I have nothing to be proud of. I am a poor sinner, but

* This piece of frugal industry is not imaginary, but a real fact, as is the character of the shepherd, and his uncommon knowledge of the Scriptures.

indeed, sir, I am proud of my wife: she is not only the most tidy, notable woman on the plain, but she is the kindest wife and mother, and the most contented, thankful Christian that I know. Last year I thought I should have lost her in a violent fit of the rheumatism, caught by going to work too soon after her lying-in, I fear; for 'tis but a bleak coldish place, as you may see, sir, in winter, and sometimes the snow lies so long under the hill, that I can hardly make myself a path to get out and buy a few necessaries in the next village; and we are afraid to send out the children, for fear they should be lost when the snow is deep. So, as I was saying, the poor soul was very bad indeed, and for several weeks lost the use of all her limbs except her hands; a merciful Providence spared her the use of these, so that when she could not turn in her bed, she could contrive to patch a rag or two for her family. She was always saying, had it not been for the great goodness of God, she might have had her hands lame as well as her feet, or the palsy instead of the rheumatism, and then she could have done nothing—but, nobody had so many mercies as she had.

'I will not tell you what we suffered during that bitter weather, sir, but my wife's faith and patience during that trying time, were as good a lesson to me as any sermon I could hear, and yet Mr. Jenkins gave us very comfortable ones too, that helped to keep up my spirits.'

'I fear, shepherd,' said Mr. Johnson, 'you have found this to be but a bad world.'

'Yes, sir,' replied the shepherd, 'but it is governed by a good God. And though my trials have now and then been sharp, why then, sir, as the saying is, if the pain be violent, it is seldom lasting, and if it be but moderate, why then we can bear it the longer, and when it is quite taken away, ease is the more precious, and gratitude is quickened by the remembrance; thus every way, and in every case, I can always find out a reason for vindicating Providence.'

'But,' said Mr. Johnson, 'how do you do to support yourself under the pressure of actual want. Is not hunger a great weakener of your faith?'

'Sir,' replied the shepherd, 'I endeavour to live upon the promises. You who abound in the good things of this world are apt to set too high a value on them. Suppose, sir, the king, seeing me at hard work, were to say to me, that, if I would patiently work on till Christmas, a fine palace and a great estate should be the reward of my labours. Do you think, sir, that a little hunger, or a little wet, would make me flinch, when I was sure that a few months would put me in possession! Should I not say to myself frequently—cheer up, shepherd, 'tis but till Christmas! now is there not much less difference between this supposed day and Christmas, when I should take possession of the estate and palace, than there is between time and eternity, when I am sure of entering on a kingdom not made with hands? There is some comparison between a moment and a thousand years, because a thousand years are made up of moments, all time being made up of the same sort of stuff, as I may say; while there is no sort of comparison between the longest portion of time and eternity. You know, sir, there is no way of measuring two things, one of which has length and breadth, which shows it must have an end somewhere, and another thing, which being eternal, is without end and without measure.'

'But,' said Mr. Johnson, 'is not the fear of death sometimes too strong for your faith?'

'Blessed be God, sir,' replied the shepherd, 'the dark passage through the valley of the shadow of death, is made safe by the power of Him who conquered death. I know, indeed, we shall go as naked out of this world as we came into it, but an humble penitent will not be found naked in the other world, sir. My Bible tells me of garments of praise, and robes of righteousness. And is it not a support, sir, under any of the petty difficulties and distresses here, to be assured by the word of Him who cannot lie, that those who were in white robes came out of tribulation? But, sir, I beg your pardon for being so talkative. Indeed you great folks can hardly imagine how it raises and cheers a poor man's heart, when such as you condescend to talk familiarly to him on religious subjects. It seems to be a practical comment on that text which says, *the rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all.* And so far from creating disrespect, sir, and that nonsensical wicked notion about equality, it rather prevents it. But to turn to my wife. One Sunday afternoon when she was at the worst, as I was coming out of church, for I went one part of the day, and my eldest daughter the other, so my poor wife was never left alone; as I was coming out of church, I say, Mr. Jenkins, the minister, called out to me and asked me how my wife did, saying he had been kept from coming to see her by the deep fall of snow, and indeed from the parsonage-house to my hovel it was quite impassable. I gave him all the particulars he asked, and I am afraid a good many more, for my heart was quite full. He kindly gave me a shilling, and said he would certainly try to pick out his way and come and see her in a day or two.

'While he was talking to me a plain farmer-looking gentleman in boots, who stood by, listened to all I said, but seemed to take no notice. It was Mr. Jenkin's wife's father, who was come to pass the Christmas-holidays at the parsonage-house. I had always heard him spoken of as a plain frugal man, who lived close himself, but was remarked to give away more than any of his show-away neighbours.

'Well! I went home with great spirits at this seasonable and unexpected supply; for we had tapped our last sixpence, and there was little work to be had on account of the weather. I told my wife I had not come back empty-handed.—'No, I dare say not,' says she, 'you have been serving a master *who filleth the hungry with good things, though he sendeth the rich empty away.*' True; Mary, says I, we seldom fail to get good spiritual food from Mr. Jenkins, but to-day he has kindly supplied our bodily wants. She was more thankful when I showed her the shilling, than, I dare say, some

of your great people are when they get a hundred pounds.'

Mr. Johnson's heart smote him when he heard such a value set upon a shilling; surely, said he to himself, I will never waste another; but he said nothing to the shepherd, who thus pursued his story:

'Next morning before I went out, I sent part of the money to buy a little ale and brown sugar to put into her water-gruel; which you know, sir, made it nice and nourishing. I went out to cleave wood in a farm-yard, for there was no standing out on the plain, after such snow as had fallen in the night. I went with a lighter heart than usual, because I had left my poor wife a little better, and comfortably supplied for this day, and I now resolved more than ever to trust God for the supplies of the next. When I came back at night, my wife fell a crying as soon as she saw me. This, I own, I thought but a bad return for the blessings she had so lately received, and so I told her.—'Oh,' said she, 'it is too much, we are too rich; I am now frightened, not lest we should have no portion in this world, but for fear we should have our whole portion in it. Look here, John!' So saying, she uncovered the bed whereon she lay, and showed me two warm, thick, new blankets. I could not believe my own eyes, sir, because when I went out in the morning, I had left her with no other covering than our little old, thin, blue rug. I was still more amazed when she put half a crown into my hand, telling me she had had a visit from Mr. Jenkins, and Mr. Jones, the latter of whom had bestowed all these good things upon us. Thus, sir, have our lives been crowned with mercies. My wife got about again, and I do believe, under Providence, it was owing to these comforts; for the rheumatism, sir, without blankets by night, and flannel by day, is but a baddish job, especially to people who have little or no fire. She will always be a weakly body; but thank God her soul prospers and is in health. But I beg your pardon, sir, for talking on at this rate.'—'Not at all, not at all,' said Mr. Johnson; 'I am much pleased with your story, you shall certainly see me in a few days. Good night.' So saying, he slipped a crown into his hand and rode off. Surely, said the shepherd, *goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life*, as he gave the money to his wife when he got home at night.

As to Mr. Johnson, he found abundant matter for his thoughts during the rest of his journey. On the whole, he was more disposed to envy than to pity the shepherd. I have seldom seen, said he, so happy a man. It is a sort of happiness which the world could not give, and which I plainly see, it has not been able to take away. This must be the true spirit of religion. I see more and more, that true goodness is not merely a thing of words and opinions, but a living principle brought into every common action of a man's life. What else could have supported this poor couple under every bitter trial of want and sickness? No, my honest shepherd, I do not pity, but I respect and even honour thee; and I will visit thy poor hovel on my return to Salisbury, with as much pleasure as I am now going to the house of my friend.

If Mr. Johnson keeps his word in sending me an account of his visit to the shepherd's cottage, I shall be very glad to entertain my readers with it.

PART II.

I AM willing to hope that my readers will not be sorry to hear some farther particulars of their old acquaintance, *the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain*. They will call to mind that at the end of the first part, he was returning home full of gratitude for the favours he had received from Mr. Johnson, whom we left pursuing his journey, after having promised to make a visit to the shepherd's cottage.

Mr. Johnson, after having passed some time with his friend, set out on his return to Salisbury, and on the Saturday evening reached a very small inn, a mile or two distant from the shepherd's village; for he never travelled on a Sunday without such a reason as he might be able to produce at the day of judgment. He went the next morning to the church nearest the house where he had passed the night; and after taking such refreshment as he could get at that house, he walked on to find out the shepherd's cottage. His reason for visiting him on a Sunday was chiefly because he supposed it to be the only day which the shepherd's employment allowed him to pass at home with his family; and as Mr. Johnson had been struck with his talk, he thought it would be neither unpleasant or unprofitable to observe how a man who carried such an appearance of piety spent his Sunday: for though he was so low in the world, this gentleman was not above entering very closely into his character, of which he thought he should be able to form a better judgment, by seeing whether his practice at home kept pace with his professions abroad: for it is not so much by observing how people talk, as how they live, that we ought to judge of their characters.

After a pleasant walk, Mr. Johnson got within sight of the cottage, to which he was directed by the clump of hawthorns and the broken chimney. He wished to take the family by surprise; and walking gently up to the house he stood awhile to listen. The door being half open he saw the shepherd who (looked so respectable in his Sunday coat that he should hardly have known him) his wife, and their numerous young family, drawing round their little table, which was covered with a clean, though very coarse cloth. There stood on it a large dish of potatoes, a brown pitcher, and a piece of a coarse loaf. The wife and children stood in silent attention, while the shepherd, with uplifted hands and eyes, devoutly begged the blessing of heaven on their homely fare. Mr. Johnson could not help sighing to reflect, that he had sometimes seen better dinners eaten with less appearance of thankfulness.

The shepherd and his wife sat down with

great seeming cheerfulness, but the children stood; and while the mother was helping them, little fresh-coloured Molly, who had picked the wool from the bushes with so much delight, cried out, 'Father I wish I was big enough to say grace, I am sure I should say it very heartily to-day, for I was thinking what must *poor* people do who have no salt to their potatoes; and do but look, our dish is quite full.'—'That is the true way of thinking, Molly,' said the father; 'in whatever concerns bodily wants and bodily comforts, it is our duty to compare our own lot with the lot of those who are worse off, and will keep us thankful: on the other hand whenever we are tempted to set up our own wisdom or goodness, we must compare ourselves with those who are wiser and better, and that will keep us humble.' Molly was now so hungry, and found the potatoes so good, that she had no time to make any more remarks; but was devouring her dinner very heartily, when the barking of the great dog drew her attention from her trencher to the door, and spying the stranger, she cried out, 'Look father, see here, if yonder is not the good gentleman!' Mr. Johnson finding himself discovered, immediately walked in, and was heartily welcomed by the honest shepherd, who told his wife that this was the gentleman to whom they were so much obliged.

The good woman began, as some very neat people are rather apt to do, with making many apologies that her house was not cleaner, and that things were not in a fitter order to receive such a gentleman. Mr. Johnson, however, on looking round, could discover nothing but the most perfect neatness. The trenchers on which they were eating, were almost as white as their linen; and notwithstanding the number and smallness of the children, there was not the least appearance of dirt or litter. The furniture was very simple and poor, hardly indeed amounting to bare necessaries. It consisted of four brown wooden chairs, which by constant rubbing, were become as bright as a looking-glass; an iron pot and kettle; a poor old grate, which scarcely held a handful of coal, and out of which the little fire that had been in it appeared to have been taken, as soon as it had answered the end for which it had been lighted—that of boiling their potatoes. Over the chimney stood an old-fashioned broad bright candlestick, and a still brighter spit; it was pretty clear that this last was kept rather for ornament than use. An old carved elbow chair, and a chest of the same date, which stood in the corner, were considered the most valuable part of the shepherd's goods, having been in his family for three generations. But all these were lightly esteemed by him, in comparison of another possession, which, added to the above, made up the whole of what he had inherited from his father; and which last he would not have parted with, if no other could have been had, for the king's ransom: this was a large old Bible, which lay on the window-seat, neatly covered with brown cloth, variously patched. This sacred book was most reverently preserved from dog's ears, dirt, and every other injury, but such as time and much use had made it suffer in spite of care. On the clean white walls was pasted, a hymn on the Crucifixion of our Saviour, a print of the Prodigal Son, the Shepherd's Hymn, a *New History of a True Book*, and Patient Joe, or the Newcastle Collier.*

After the first salutations were over, Mr. Johnson said, that if they would go on with their dinner he would sit down. Though a good deal ashamed, they thought it more respectful to obey the gentleman, who having cast his eye on their slender provisions, gently rebuked the shepherd for not having indulged himself, as it was Sunday, with a morsel of bacon to relish his potatoes. The shepherd said nothing, but poor Mary coloured and hung down her head, saying, 'Indeed, sir, it is not my fault, I did beg my husband to allow himself a bit of meat to-day out of your honour's bounty; but he was too good to do it, and it is all for my sake.' The shepherd seemed unwilling to come to an explanation, but Mr. Johnson desired Mary to go on. So she continued: 'You must know, sir, that both of us, next to a sin, dread a debt, and indeed in some cases a debt is a sin; but with all our care and pains, we have never been able quite to pay off the doctor's bill for that bad fit of rheumatism which I had last winter. Now when you were pleased to give my husband that kind present the other day, I heartily desired him to buy a bit of meat for Sunday as I said before, that he might have a little refreshment for himself out of your kindness.—'But answered he, 'Mary, it is never out of my mind long together that we still owe a few shillings to the doctor (and thank God it is all we did owe in the world.) Now if I carry him this money directly it will not only show him our honesty and our good-will, but it will be an encouragement to him to come to you another time in case you should be taken once more in such a bad fit; for I must own,' added my poor husband, 'that the thought of your being so terribly ill without any help, is the only misfortune that I want courage to face.'

Here the grateful woman's tears ran down so fast that she could not go on. She wiped them with the corner of her apron, and humbly begged pardon for making so free. 'Indeed, sir,' said the shepherd, 'though my wife is full as unwilling to be in debt as myself, yet I could hardly prevail on her to consent to my paying this money just then, because she said it was hard I should not have a taste of the gentleman's bounty myself.—But for once, sir, I would have my own way. For you must know, as I pass best part of my time alone, tending my sheep, 'tis a great point with me, sir, to get comfortable matter for my own thoughts; so that 'tis rather self-interest in me to allow myself in no pleasures and no practices that won't bear thinking on over and over. For when one is a good deal alone, you know, sir, all one's bad deeds do so rush in upon one, as I may say, and so torment one, that there is no true comfort to be had but in keeping clear of wrong doings and false pleasures; and that I suppose may be one reason why so many folks hate to stay a bit by themselves. But as I was saying—when I came to think the matter over on the hill yon-

* Printed for the Cheap Repository.

der, said I to myself, a good dinner is a good thing I grant, and yet it will be but cold comfort to me a week after, to be able to say—to be sure I had a nice shoulder of mutton last Sunday for dinner, thanks to the good gentleman! but then I am in debt. I *had* a rare dinner, that's certain, but the pleasure of that has long been over, and the debt still remains. I have spent the crown; and now if my poor wife should be taken in one of those fits again, die she must, unless God work a miracle to prevent it, for I can get no help for her. This thought settled all; and I set off directly and paid the crown to the doctor with as much cheerfulness as I should have felt on sitting down to the fattest shoulder of mutton that ever was roasted. And if I was contented at the time, think how much more happy I have been at the remembrance! O sir, there are no pleasures worth the name but such as bring no plague or penitence after them.'

Mr. Johnson was satisfied with the shepherd's reasons; and agreed that though a good dinner was not to be despised, yet it was not worthy to be compared with *a contented mind, which* (as the Bible truly says) *is a continual feast.* 'But come,' said the good gentleman, 'what have we got in this brown mug?'—'As good water,' said the shepherd, 'as any in the king's dominions. I have heard of countries beyond sea, in which there is no wholesome water; nay, I have been myself in a great town not far off, where they are obliged to buy all the water which they get, while a good Providence sends to my very door a spring as clear and fine as Jacob's well. When I am tempted to repine that I have often no other drink, I call to mind, that it was nothing better than a cup of cold water which the woman at the well of Sychar drew for the greatest guest that ever visited this world.

'Very well,' replied Mr. Johnson; 'but as your honesty has made you prefer a poor meal to being in debt, I will at least send and get something for you to drink. I saw a little public house just by the church, as I came along. Let that little rosy-faced fellow fetch a mug of beer.' So saying, he looked full at the boy, who did not offer to stir; but cast an eye at his father to know what he was to do. 'Sir,' said the shepherd, 'I hope we shall not appear ungrateful, if we seem to refuse your favour; my little body would, I am sure, fly to serve you on any other occasion. But, good sir, it is Sunday; and should any of my family be seen at a public house on a Sabbath-day, it would be a much greater grief to me than to drink water all my life. I am often talking against these doings to others; and if I should say one thing and do another, you can't think what an advantage it would give many of my neighbours over me, who would be glad enough to report that they had caught the shepherd's son at the alehouse without explaining how it happened. Christians you know, sir, must be doubly watchful; or they will not only bring disgrace on themselves, but what is much worse, on that holy name by which they are called.'

'Are you not a little too cautious, my honest friend?' said Mr. Johnson. 'I humbly ask your pardon, sir,' replied the shepherd, 'if I think that is impossible. In my poor notion I no more understand how a man can be too cautious, than how he can be too strong, or too healthy.'

'You are right indeed,' said Mr. Johnson, 'as a general principle, but this struck me as a very small thing.'—'Sir,' said the shepherd, 'I am afraid you will think me very bold, but you encourage me to speak out.'—''Tis what I wish,' said the gentleman. 'Then, sir,' resumed the shepherd, 'I doubt if, where there is a frequent temptation to do wrong, any fault can be called small; that is, in short, if there is any such thing as a small wilful sin. A poor man like me is seldom called out to do great things, so that it is not by a few striking deeds his character can be judged by his neighbours, but by the little round of daily customs he allows himself in.'

'I should like,' said Mr. Johnson, 'to know how you manage in this respect.'

'I am but a poor scholar, sir' replied the shepherd, 'but I have made myself a little sort of rule. I always avoid, as I am an ignorant man, picking out any one single difficult text to distress my mind about, or to go and build opinions upon, because I know that puzzles and injures poor unlearned Christians. But I endeavour to collect what is the *general* spirit or meaning of Scripture on any particular subject, by putting a few texts together, which though I find them dispersed up and down, yet all seem to look the same way, to prove the same truth, or hold out the same comfort. So when I am tried or tempted, or any thing happens in which I am at a loss what to do, I apply to my rule—to the *law and the testimony.* To be sure I can't always find a particular direction as to the very case, because then the Bible must have been bigger than all those great books I once saw in the library at Salisbury palace, which the butler told me were acts of parliament; and had that been the case, a poor man would never have had money to buy, nor a working man time to read the Bible; and so Christianity could only have been a religion for the rich, for those who had money and leisure; which, blessed be God! is so far from being the truth, that in all that fine discourse of our Saviour to John's disciples, it is enough to reconcile any poor man in the world to his low condition, to observe, when Christ reckons up the things for which he came on earth, to observe, I say, what he keeps for last. *Go tell John,* says he, *those things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up.* Now, sir, all these are wonders to be sure, but they are nothing to what follows. They are but like the lower rounds of a ladder, as I may say, by which you mount to the top—*and the poor have the Gospel preached to them.* I dare say, if John had any doubts before, this part of the message must have cleared them up at once. For it must have made him certain sure at once, that a religion which placed preaching salvation to the poor above healing the sick, which ranked the soul above the body, and set heaven above health, must have come from God.'

'But,' said Mr. Johnson, 'you say you can generally pick out your particular duty from

the Bible, though that immediate duty be not fully explained.'

'Indeed, sir,' replied the shepherd, 'I think I can find out the principle at least, if I bring but a willing mind. The want of that is the great hindrance. *Whoso doeth my will, he shall know of the doctrine.* You know that text, sir. I believe a stubborn will makes the Bible harder to be understood than any want of learning. 'Tis corrupt affections which blind the understanding, sir. The more a man hates sin, the clearer he will see his way, and the more he loves holiness, the better he will understand his Bible—the more practical conviction will he get of that pleasant truth, that *the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.* Now, sir, suppose I had time and learning, and possessed of all the books I saw at the bishop's, where could I find out a surer way to lay the axe to the root of all covetousness, selfishness, and injustice, than the plain and ready rule, *to do unto all men as I would they should do unto me.* If my neighbour does me an injury, can I be at any loss how to proceed with him, when I recollect the parable of the unforgiving steward, who refused to pardon a debt of a hundred pence, when his own ten thousand talents had been remitted to him? I defy any man to retain habitual selfishness, hardness of heart, or any other allowed sin, who daily and conscientiously tries his own heart by this touchstone. The straight rule will show the crooked practice to every one who honestly tries the one by the other.'

'Why you seem to make Scripture a thing of general application,' said Mr. Johnston, 'in cases in which many, I fear do not apply.'

'It applies to every thing, sir,' replied the shepherd. 'When those men who are now disturbing the peace of the world, and trying to destroy the confidence of God's children in their Maker and their Saviour; when those men, I say, came to my poor hovel with their new doctrines and their new books, I would never look into one of them; for I remember it was the first sin of the first pair to lose their innocence for the sake of a little wicked knowledge; besides, *my own book* told me—*To fear God and honour the king—To meddle not with them who are given to change—Not to speak evil of dignities—To render honour to whom honour is due.* So that I was furnished with a little coat of mail, as I may say, which preserved me, while those who had no such armour fell into the snare.'

While they were thus talking, the children who had stood very quietly behind, and had not stirred a foot, now began to scamper about all at once, and in a moment ran to the window-seat to pick up their little old hats. Mr. Johnson looked surprised at this disturbance; the shepherd asked his pardon, telling him it was the sound of the church bell which had been the cause of their rudeness; for their mother had brought them up with such a fear of being too late for church, that it was but who could catch the first stroke of the bell, and be first ready. He had always taught them to think that nothing was more indecent than to get into church after it was begun; for as the service opened with an exhortation to repentance, and a confession of sin, it looked very presumptuous not to be ready to join it; it looked as if people did not feel themselves to be sinners. And though such as lived at a great distance might plead difference of clocks as an excuse, yet those who lived within the sound of the bell, could pretend neither ignorance nor mistake.

Mary and her children set forward. Mr. Johnson and the shepherd followed, taking care to talk the whole way on such subjects as might fit them for the solemn duties of the place to which they were going. 'I have often been sorry to observe, said Mr. Johnson, 'that many who are reckoned decent, good kind of people, and who would on no account neglect going to church, yet seem to care but little in what frame or temper of mind they go thither. They will talk of their worldly concerns till they get within the door, and then take them up again the very minute the sermon is over, which makes me ready to fear they lay too much stress on the mere form of going to a place of worship. Now, for my part, I always find that it requires a little time to bring my mind into a state fit to do any *common* business well, much more this great and most necessary business of all.'—'Yes, sir,' replied the shepherd; 'and then I think too how busy I should be in preparing my mind, if I were going into the presence of a great gentleman, or a lord, or the king; and shall the King of kings be treated with less respect? Besides, one likes to see people feel as if going to church was a thing of choice and pleasure, as well as a duty, and that they were as desirous not to be the last there, as they would be if they were going to a feast or a fair.'

After service, Mr. Jenkins the clergyman, who was well acquainted with the character of Mr. Johnson, and had a great respect for him, accosted him with much civility; expressing his concern that he could not enjoy just now so much of his conversation as he wished, as he was obliged to visit a sick person at a distance, but hoped to have a little talk with him before he left the village. As they walked along together, Mr. Johnson made such inquiries about the shepherd, as served to confirm him in the high opinion he entertained of his piety, good sense, industry, and self-denial. They parted; the clergyman promising to call in at the cottage in his way home.

The shepherd, who took it for granted that Mr. Johnson was gone to the parsonage, walked home with his wife and children, and was beginning in his usual way to catechise and instruct his family, when Mr. Johnson came in, and insisted that the shepherd should go on with his instructions just as if he were not there. This gentleman, who was very desirous of being useful to his own servants and workmen in the way of religious instruction, was sometimes sorry to find that though he took a good deal of pains, they now and then did not quite understand him; for though his meaning was very good, his language was not always very plain; and though the *things* he said were not hard to be understood, yet the *words* were, especially to such as were very ignorant. And he now began to find out that if people were ever so wise and good, yet if they had not a simple, agreeable, and familiar way of expressing themselves, some

of their plain hearers would not be much the better for them. For this reason he was not above listening to the plain, humble way in which this honest man taught his family; for though he knew that he himself had many advantages over the shepherd; had more learning, and could teach him many things, yet he was not too proud to learn even of so poor a man, in any point where he thought the shepherd might have the advantage of him.

This gentleman was much pleased with the knowledge and piety which he discovered in the answers of the children: and desired the shepherd to tell him how he contrived to keep up a sense of divine things in his own mind, and in that of his family, with so little leisure, and so little reading. 'Oh! as to that, sir,' said the shepherd,' 'we do not read much except in one book, to be sure; but with my heart prayer for God's blessing on the use of that book, what little knowledge is needful seems to come of course, as it were. And my chief study has been to bring the fruits of the Sunday reading into the week's business, and to keep up the same sense of God in the heart, when the Bible is in the cupboard as when it is in the hand. In short, to apply what I read in the book to what I meet with in the field.'

'I don't quite understand you,' said Mr. Johnson. 'Sir, replied the shepherd, 'I have but a poor gift at conveying those things to others, though I have much comfort from them in my own mind; but I am sure that the most ignorant and hard-working people,who are in earnest about their salvation, may help to keep up devout thoughts and good affections during the week, though they have hardly any time to look at a book; and it will help them to keep out bad thoughts too; which is no small matter. But then they must know the Bible; they must have read the word of God diligently; that is a kind of stock in trade for a Christian to set up with; and it is this which makes me so careful in teaching it to my children; and even in storing their memories with psalms and chapters. This is a great help to a poor hard-working man, who will scarcely meet with any thing in them but what he may turn to some good account. If one lives in the fear and love of God, almost every thing one sees abroad will teach one to adore his power and goodness, and bring to mind some text of Scripture, which shall fill his heart with thankfulness, and the mouth with praise. When I look upwards *the Heavens declare the glory of God*, and shall I be silent and ungrateful? If I look round and see the vallies standing thick with corn, how can I help blessing that Power who *giveth me all things richly to enjoy?* I may learn gratitude from the beasts of the field, for the *ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib*, and shall a Christian not know, shall a Christian not consider what great things God has done for *him*? I, who am a shepherd, endeavour to fill my soul with a constant remembrance of that good shepherd, who *feedeth me in green pastures, and maketh me to lie down beside the still waters, and whose rod and staff comfort me.* A religion, sir, which has its seat in the heart, and its fruits in the life, takes up little time in the study. And yet in another sense, true religion, which from sound principles brings forth right practice, fills up the whole time, and life too as one may say.'

'You are happy,' said Mr. Johnson, 'in this retired life, by which you escape the corruptions of the world.' 'Sir,' replied the shepherd, 'I do not escape the corruptions of my own evil nature. Even there, on that wild solitary hill, I can find out that my heart is prone to evil thoughts. I suppose, sir, that different states have different temptations. You great folks that live in the world, perhaps, are exposed to some, of which such a poor man as I am, knows nothing. But to one who leads a lonely life like me, evil thoughts are a chief besetting sin; and I can no more withstand these without the grace of God, than a rich gentleman can withstand the snares of evil company, without the same grace. And I find that I stand in need of God's help continually, and if he should give me up to my own evil heart I should be lost.'

Mr. Johnson approved of the shepherd's sincerity, for he had always observed, that where there was no humility, and no watchfulness against sin, there was no religion, and he said that the man who did not feel himself to be a sinner, in his opinion could not be a Christian.

Just as they were in this part of their discourse, Mr. Jenkins, the clergyman, came in. After the usual salutations, he said, 'Well shepherd, I wish you joy; I know you will be sorry to gain any advantage by the death of a neighbour; but old Wilson, my clerk, was so infirm, and I trust so well prepared, that there is no reason to be sorry for his death. I have been to pray by him, but he died while I staid. I have always intended you should succeed to his place; 'tis no great matter of profit, but every little is something.'

'No great matter, sir!' cried the shepherd; 'indeed it is a great thing to me; it will more than pay my rent. Blessed be God for all his goodness!'—Mary said nothing, but lifted up her eyes full of tears in silent gratitude.

'I am glad of this little circumstance,' said Mr. Jenkins, 'not only for your sake, but for the sake of the office itself. I so heartily reverence every religious institution, that I would never have even the *amen* added to the excellent prayers of our church, by vain or profane lips, and if it depended on me, there should be no such thing in the land as an idle, drunken, or irreligious parish clerk. Sorry I am to say that this matter is not always sufficiently attended to, and that I know some of a very indifferent character.

Mr. Johnson now inquired of the clergyman whether there were many children in the parish. 'More than you would expect,' replied he, 'from the seeming smallness of it; but there are some little hamlets which you do not see.'—'I think,' returned Mr. Johnson, 'I recollect that in the conversation I had with the shepherd on the hill yonder, he told me you had no Sunday school.' 'I am sorry to say we have none,' said the minister. 'I do what I can to remedy this misfortune by public catechising; but having two or three churches to serve, I cannot give so much time as I wish to private instruction; and having a large family of my own, and no assistance from

others, I have never been able to establish a school.'

'There is an excellent institution in London,' said Mr. Johnson, 'called the Sunday-school Society, which kindly gives books and other helps, on the application of such pious clergymen as stand in need of their aid, and which I am sure would have assisted you, but I think we shall be able to do something ourselves. 'Shepherd,' continued he, 'if I were a king, and had it in my power to make you a rich and a great man, with a word speaking, I would not do it. Those who are raised, by some sudden stroke, much above the station in which Divine Providence had placed them, seldom turn out very good, or very happy. I have never had any great things in my power, but as far as I have been able, I have been always glad to assist the worthy. I have, however, never attempted or desired to set any poor man much above his natural condition, but it is a pleasure to me to lend him such assistance as may make that condition more easy to himself, and put him in a way which shall call him to the performance of more duties than perhaps he could have performed without my help, and of performing them in a better manner to others, and with more comfort to himself.—What rent do you pay for this cottage?'

'Fifty shillings a year, sir,'

'It is in a sad tattered condition; is there not a better to be had in the village?'

'That in which the poor clerk lived,' said the clergyman, 'is not only more tight and whole, but has two decent chambers, and a very large light kitchen.'—'That will be very convenient,' replied Mr. Johnson, 'pray what is the rent?'—'I think,' said the shepherd, 'poor neighbour Wilson gave somewhat about four pounds a year, or it might be guineas.'—'Very well,' said Mr. Johnson, 'and what will the clerk's place be worth, think you?' About three pounds, was the answer.

'Now,' continued Mr. Johnson, 'my plan is that the shepherd should take that house immediately; for as the poor man is dead, there will be no need of waiting till quarter-day, if I make up the difference.' 'True, sir,' said Mr. Jenkins, 'and I am sure my wife's father, whom I expect to-morrow, will willingly assist a little towards buying some of the clerk's old goods. And the sooner they remove the better, for poor Mary caught that bad rheumatism by sleeping under a leaky thatch.' The shepherd was too much moved to speak, and Mary could hardly sob out, 'Oh, sir! you are too good; indeed this house will do very well.' 'It may do very well for you and your children, Mary,' said Mr. Johnson gravely, 'but it will not do for a school; the kitchen is neither large nor light enough. Shepherd,' continued he, 'with your good minister's leave, and kind assistance, I propose to set up in this parish a Sunday School, and to make you the master. It will not at all interfere with your weekly calling, and it is the only lawful way in which you could turn the Sabbath into a day of some little profit to your family, by doing, as I hope, a great deal of good to the souls of others. The rest of the week you will work as usual. The difference of rent between this house and the clerk's I shall pay myself, for to put you in a better house at your own expense would be no great act of kindness.—As for honest Mary, who is not fit for hard labour, or any other out-of-door, work, I propose to endow a small weekly school, of which she shall be the mistress, and employ her notable turn to good account, by teaching ten or a dozen girls to knit, sew, spin, card, or any other useful way of getting their bread; for all this I shall only pay her the usual price, for I am not going to make you rich, but useful.'

'Not rich, sir?' cried the shepherd; 'How can I ever be thankful enough for such blessings? And will my poor Mary have a dry thatch over her head? and shall I be able to send for the doctor when I am like to lose her? Indeed my cup runs over with blessings, I hope God will give me humility.'—Here he and Mary looked at each other and burst into tears. The gentleman saw their distress, and kindly walked out upon the little green before the door, that these honest people might give vent to their feelings. As soon as they were alone they crept into one corner of the room, where they thought they could not be seen, and fell on their knees, devoutly blessing and praising God for his mercies. Never were more hearty prayers presented, than this grateful couple offered up for their benefactors. The warmth of their gratitude could only be equalled by the earnestness with which they besought the blessing of God on the work in which they were going to engage.

The two gentlemen now left this happy family, and walked to the parsonage, where the evening was spent in a manner very edifying to Mr. Johnson, who the next day took all proper measures for putting the shepherd in immediate possession of his now comfortable habitation. Mr. Jenkins's father-in-law, the worthy gentleman who gave the shepherd's wife the blankets, in the first part of this history, arrived at the parsonage before Mr. Johnson left it, and assisted in fitting up the clerk's cottage.

Mr. Johnson took his leave, promising to call on the worthy minister and his new clerk once a year, in his summer's journey over the plain, as long as it should please God to spare his life. He had every reason to be satisfied with the objects of his bounty. The shepherd's zeal and piety made him a blessing to the rising generation. The old resorted to his school for the benefit of hearing the young instructed; and the clergyman had the pleasure of seeing that he was rewarded for the protection he gave the school by the great increase in his congregation. The shepherd not only exhorted both parents and children to the indispensable duty o a regular attendance at church, but by his pious counsels he drew them thither, and by his plain and prudent instructions enabled them to understand, and of course to delight in the public worship of God.

THE TWO SHOEMAKERS.

Jack Brown and James Stock, were two lads apprenticed at nearly the same time, to Mr. Williams, a shoemaker, in a small town in Oxfordshire: they were pretty near the same age, but of very different characters and dispositions.

Brown was eldest son to a farmer in good circumstances, who gave the usual apprentice fee with him. Being a wild giddy boy, whom his father could not well manage or instruct in farming, he thought it better to send him out to learn a trade at a distance, than to let him idle about at home; for Jack always preferred bird's-nesting and marbles to any other employment; he would trifle away the day, when his father thought he was at school, with any boys he could meet with, who were as idle as himself; and he could never be prevailed upon to do, or to learn any thing, while a game at taw could be had for love or money. All this time his little brothers, much younger than himself, were beginning to follow the plough, or to carry the corn to the mill as soon as they were able to mount a cart-horse.

Jack, however, who was a lively boy, and did not naturally want either sense or good-nature, might have turned out well enough, if he had not had the misfortune to be his mother's favourite. She concealed and forgave all his faults. To be sure he was a little wild, she would say, but he would not make the worse man for that, for Jack had a good spirit of his own, and she would not have it broke, and so make a mope of the boy. The farmer, for a quiet life, as it is called, gave up all these points to his wife, and, with them, gave up the future virtue and happiness of his child. He was a laborious and industrious man, but had no religion; he thought only of the gains and advantages of the present day, and never took the future into the account. His wife managed him entirely, and as she was really notable, he did not trouble his head about any thing farther. If she had been careless in her dairy, he would have stormed and sworn; but as she only ruined one child by indulgence, and almost broke the hearts of the rest by unkindness, he gave himself little concern about the matter. The cheese, certainly was good, and that indeed is a great point; but she was neglectful of her children, and a tyrant to her servants. Her husband's substance, indeed, was not wasted, but his happiness was not consulted. His house, it is true, was not dirty, but it was the abode of fury, ill-temper, and covetousness. And the farmer, though he did not care for liquor, was too often driven to the public-house in the evening, because his own was neither quiet nor comfortable. The mother was always scolding, and the children were always crying.

Jack, however, notwithstanding his idleness, picked up a little reading and writing, but never would learn to cast an account· that was too much labour. His mother was desirous he should continue at school, not so much for the sake of his learning, which she had not sense enough to value, but to save her darling from the fatigue of labour: for if he had not gone to school, she knew he must have gone to work, and she thought the former was the least tiresome of the two. Indeed this foolish woman had such an opinion of his genius, that she used from a child, to think he was too wise for any thing but a parson, and hoped she should live to see him one. She did not wish to see her son a minister, because she loved either learning or piety, but because she thought it would make Jack a gentleman, and set him above his brothers.

Farmer Brown still hoped, that though Jack was likely to make but an idle and ignorant farmer, yet he might make no bad tradesman, when he should be removed from the indulgences of a father's house, and from a silly mother, whose fondness kept him back in every thing. This woman was enraged when she found that so fine a scholar, as she took Jack to be, was to be put apprentice to a shoemaker. The farmer, however, for the first time in his life, would have his own way. But being a worldly man, and too apt to mind only what is falsely called *the main chance;* instead of being careful to look out for a sober, prudent, and religious master for his son, he left all that to accident, as if it had been a thing of little or no consequence. This is a very common fault; and fathers who are guilty of it, are in a great measure answerable for the future sins and errors of their children, when they come out into the world, and set up for themselves. If a man gives his son a good education, a good example, and a good master, it is indeed *possible* that the son may not turn out well, but it does not often happen; and when it does, the father has no blame resting on him; and it is a great point towards a man's comfort to have his conscience quiet in that respect, however God may think fit to overrule events.

The farmer, however, took care to desire his friends to inquire for a shoemaker who had good business, and was a good workman; and the mother did not forget to put in her word, and desired that it might be one who was not *too strict;* for Jack had been brought up tenderly, was a meek boy, and could not bear to be contradicted in any thing. And this is the common notion of meekness among people who do not take up their notions on rational and Christian grounds.

Mr. Williams was recommended to the farmer as being the best shoemaker in the town in which he lived, and far from a strict master; and, without farther inquiries, to Mr. Williams he went.

James Stock, who was the son of an honest labourer in the next village, was bound out by the parish in consideration of his father having so numerous a family, that he was not able to put him out himself. James was in every thing the very reverse of his new companion. He was a modest, industrious, pious youth; and though so poor, and the child of a labourer, was a much

better scholar than Jack, who was a wealthy farmer's son.—His father had, it is true, been able to give him but very little schooling, for he was obliged to be put to work when quite a child. When very young he used to run of errands for Mr. Thomas, the curate of the parish; a very kind-hearted young gentleman, who boarded next door to his father's cottage. He used also to rub down and saddle his horse, and do any other little job for him, in the most civil obliging manner. All this so recommended him to the clergyman, that he would often send for him of an evening, after he had done his day's work in the field, and condescended to teach him himself to write and cast accounts, as well as to instruct him in the principles of his religion. It was not merely out of kindness for the little good-natured services James did him, that he showed him this favour, but also for his readiness in the catechism, and his devout behaviour at church.

The first thing that drew the minister's attention to this boy, was the following; he had frequently given him half-pence and pence for holding his horse and carrying him to water before he was big enough to be further useful to him. On Christmas day he was surprised to see James at church, reading out of a handsome new prayer-book; he wondered how he came by it, for he knew there was nobody in the parish likely to have given it to him, for at that time there were no Sunday schools; and the father could not afford it he was sure.

'Well James,' said he, as he saw him when they came out, 'you made a good figure at church to-day: it made you look like a man and a Christian, not only to have so handsome a book, but to be so ready in all parts of the service. How came you by that book?' James owned modestly, that he had been a whole year saving up the money by single half-pence, all of which had been of the minister's own giving, and that in all that time he had not spent a single farthing on his own diversions.—'My dear boy,' said the good Mr. Thomas, 'I am much mistaken if thou dost not turn out well in the world, for two reasons:—first, from thy saving turn and self-denying temper; and next, because thou didst devote the first eighteen-pence thou wast ever worth in the world to so good a purpose.'

James bowed and blushed, and from that time Mr. Thomas began to take more notice of him, and to instruct him as I said above. As James soon grew able to do him more considerable service, he would now and then give him a sixpence. This he constantly saved till it became a little sum, with which he bought shoes and stockings; well knowing that his poor father, with a large family and low wages, could not buy them for him. As to what little money he earned himself by his daily labour in the field, he constantly carried it to his mother every Saturday night, to buy bread for the family, which was a pretty help to them.

As James was not overstout in his make, his father thankfully accepted the offer of the parish officers to bind out his son to a trade. This good man, however, had not, like farmer Brown, the liberty of choosing a master for his son; or he would carefully have inquired if he was a proper man to have the care of youth; but Williams the shoemaker was already fixed on, by those who were to put the boy out, who told him if he wanted a master it must be him or none; for the overseers had a better opinion of Williams than he deserved, and thought it would be the making of the boy to go to him. The father knew that beggars must not be choosers, so he fitted out James for his new place, having indeed little to give him besides his blessing.

The worthy Mr. Thomas, however, kindly gave him an old coat and waistcoat, which his mother, who was a neat and notable woman, contrived to make up for him herself without a farthing expense, and when it was turned and made fit for his size, it made him a very handsome suit for Sundays, and lasted him a couple of years.

And here let me stop to remark what a pity it is, that poor women so seldom are able or willing to do these sort of little handy jobs themselves; and that they do not oftener bring up their daughters to be more useful in family work. They are great losers by it every way, not only as they are disqualifying their girls from making good wives hereafter, but they are losers in point of present advantage; for gentry could much oftener afford to give a poor boy a jacket or a waistcoat, if it was not for the expense of making it, which adds very much to the cost. To my certain knowledge, many poor women would often get an old coat, or a bit of coarse new cloth given to them to fit out a boy, if the mothers or sisters were known to be able to cut out to advantage, and to make it up decently themselves. But half a crown for the making a bit of kersey, which costs but a few shillings, is more than many very charitable gentry can afford to give—so they often give nothing at all, when they see the mothers so little able to turn it to advantage. It is hoped they will take this hint kindly, as it is meant for their good.

But to return to our two young shoe-makers. They were both now settled at Mr. Williams's, who, as he was known to be a good workman, had plenty of business—He had sometimes two or three journeymen, but no apprentices but Jack and James.

Jack, who, with all his faults, was a keen, smart boy, took to learn the trade quick enough, but the difficulty was to make him stick two hours together to his work. At every noise he heard in the street down went the work—the last one way, the upper leather another; the sole dropped on the ground, and the thread dragged after him, all the way up the street. If a blind fiddler, a ballad singer, a mountebank, a dancing bear, or a drum were heard at a distance—out ran Jack—nothing could stop him, and not a stich more could he be prevailed on to do that day. Every duty, every promise was forgotten for the present pleasure—he could not resist the smallest temptation—he never stopped for a moment to consider whether a thing was right or wrong, but whether he liked or disliked it. And as his ill-judging mother took care to send him privately a good supply of pocket-money, that deadly bane to all youthful virtue

he had generally a few pence ready to spend, and to indulge in the present diversion whatever it was. And what was still worse even than spending his money, he spent his time too, or rather his master's time. Of this he was continually reminded by James, to whom he always answered, 'what have you to complain about? It is nothing to you or any one else; I spend nobody's money but my own. 'That may be,' replied the other, 'but you cannot say it is your own time that you spend.' He insisted upon it that it was; but James fetched down their indentures, and there showed him that he had solemnly bound himself by that instrument, not to waste his master's property. 'Now,' quoth James, 'thy own time is a very valuable part of thy master's property.' To this he replied, 'every one's time was his own, and he should not sit moping all day over his last—for his part, he thanked God, he was no parish 'prentice.'

James did not resent this piece of foolish impertinence, as some silly lads would have done; nor fly out into a violent passion: for even at this early age, he had begun to learn of Him *who was meek and lowly of heart;* and therefore *when he was reviled, he reviled not again.* On the contrary he was so very kind and gentle, that even Jack, vain and idle as he was, could not help loving him, though he took care never to follow his advice.

Jack's fondness for his boyish and silly diversions in the street, soon produced the effects which might naturally be expected; and the same idleness which led him to fly out into the town at the sound of a fiddle or the sight of a puppet-show, soon led him to those places to which all these fiddles and shows naturally lead; I mean the *alehouse.* The acquaintance picked up in the street was carried on at the Grayhound; and the idle pastimes of the boy soon led to the destructive vices of the man.

As he was not an ill-tempered youth, nor naturally much given to drink, a sober and prudent master, who had been steady in his management and regular in his own conduct, who would have recommended good advice by a good example, might have made something of Jack. But I am sorry to say, that Mr. Williams, though a good workman, and not a very hard or severe master, was neither a sober nor a steady man—so far from it that he spent much more time at the Grayhound than at home. There was no order either in his shop or family. He left the chief care of his business to his two young apprentices; and being but a worldly man, he was at first disposed to show favour to Jack, much more than to James, because he had more money, and his father was better in the world than the father of poor James.

At first, therefore, he was disposed to consider James as a sort of drudge; who was to do all the menial work of the family, and he did not care how little he taught him of his trade. With Mrs. Williams the matter was still worse; she constantly called him away from the business of his trade to wash the house, nurse the child, turn the spit, or run of errands. And here I must remark, that though parish apprentices are bound in duty to be submissive to both master and mistress, and always to make themselves as useful as they can in a family, and to be civil and humble; yet on the other hand, it is the duty of masters always to remember, that if they are paid for instructing them in their trade, they ought conscientiously to instruct them in it, and not to employ them the greater part of their time in such household or other drudgery, as to deprive them of the opportunity of acquiring their trade. This practice is not the less unjust because it is common.

Mr. Williams soon found out that his favourite Jack would be of little use to him in the shop; for though he worked well enough, he did not care how little he did. Nor could he be of the least use to his master in keeping an account, or writing out a bill upon occasion, for, as he never could be made to learn to cypher, he did not know addition from multiplication.

One day one of the customers called at the shop in a great hurry, and desired his bill might be made out that minute. Mr. Williams, having taken a cup too much, made several attempts to put down a clear account, but the more he tried, the less he found himself able to do it. James, who was sitting at his last, rose up, and with great modesty, asked his master if he would please to give him leave to make out the bill, saying, that though but a poor scholar, he would do his best, rather than keep the gentleman waiting. Williams gladly accepted his offer, and confused as his head was with liquor, he yet was able to observe with what neatness, despatch, and exactness, the account was drawn out. From that time he no longer considered James as a drudge, but as one fitted for the high departments of the trade, and he was now regularly employed to manage the accounts, with which all the customers were so well pleased, that it contributed greatly to raise him in his master's esteem: for there were now never any of those blunders or false charges for which the shop had before been so famous.

James went on in a regular course of industry, and soon became the best workman Mr. Williams had; but there were many things in the family which he greatly disapproved. Some of the journeymen used to swear, drink, and sing very licentious songs. All these things were a great grief to his sober mind; he complained to his master who only laughed at him; and, indeed, as Williams did the same himself, he put it out of his power to correct his servants, if he had been so disposed. James however, used always to reprove them with great mildness indeed, but with great seriousness also. This, but still more his own excellent example, produced at length very good effects on such of the men as were not quite hardened in sin.

What grieved him most, was the manner in which the Sunday was spent. The master lay in bed all the morning; nor did the mother or her children ever go to church, except there was some new finery to be shown, or a christening to be attended. The town's people were coming to the shop all the morning, for work which should have been sent home the night before, had not the master been at the alehouse. And what wounded James to the very soul was, that the master expected the two apprentices to carry home shoes to the country customers on the

Sunday morning; which he wickedly though was a saving of time, as it prevented their hindering their work on the Saturday. These shameful practices greatly afflicted poor James; he begged his master with tears in his eyes, to excuse him, but he only laughed at his squeamish conscience, as he called it.

Jack did not dislike this part of the business, and generally after he had delivered his parcel, wasted good part of the day in nutting, playing at fives, or dropping in at the public house: any thing was better to Jack than going to church.

James on the other hand, when he was compelled, sorely against his conscience, to carry home any goods on a Sunday morning, always got up as soon as it was light, knelt down and prayed heartily to God to forgive him a sin which it was not in his power to avoid; he took care not to lose a moment by the way, but as he was taking his walk with the utmost speed, to leave his shoes with the customers, he spent his time in endeavouring to keep up good thoughts in his mind, and praying that the day might come when his conscience might be delivered from this grievous burthen. He was now particularly thankful, that Mr. Thomas had formerly taught him so many psalms and chapters, which he used to repeat in these walks with great devotion.

He always got home before the rest of the family were up, dressed himself very clean, and went twice to church; as he greatly disliked the company and practices of his master's house, particularly on the Sabbath-day, he preferred spending his evening alone, reading his Bible, which I had forgot to say the worthy clergyman had given him when he left his native village. Sunday evening, which is to some people such a burden, was to James the highest holiday. He had formerly learnt a little how to sing a psalm of the clerk of his own parish, and this was now become a very delightful part of his evening exercise. And as Will Simpson, one of the journeymen, by James's advice and example, was now beginning to be of a more serious way of thinking, he often asked him to sit an hour with him, when they read the Bible, and talked it over together in a manner very pleasant and improving; and as Will was a famous singer, a psalm or two sung together, was a very innocent pleasure.

James's good manners and civility to the customers drew much business to the shop; and his skill as a workman was so great, that every one desired that his shoes might be made by James. Williams grew so very idle and negligent, that he now totally neglected his affairs, and to hard drinking added deep gaming. All James's care, both of the shop and the accounts, could not keep things in any tolerable order: he represented to his master that they were growing worse and worse, and exhorted him, if he valued his credit as a tradesman, his comfort as a husband and father, his character as a master, and his soul as a Christian to turn over a new leaf. Williams swore a great oath, that he would not be restrained in his pleasures to please a canting parish 'prentice, nor to humour a parcel of squalling brats—that let people say what they would of him, they should never say he was a *hypocrite*, and as long as they could not call him that, he did not care what else they called him.

In a violent passion he immediately went to the Grayhound, where he now spent not only every evening, which he had long done, but good part of the day and night also.—His wife was very dressy, extravagant, and fond of company, and wasted at home as fast as her husband spent abroad, so that all the neighbours said, if it had not been for James, his master must have been a bankrupt long ago, but they were sure he could not hold it much longer.

As Jack Brown sung a good song, and played many diverting tricks, Williams liked his company; and often allowed him to make one at the Grayhound, where he would laugh heartily at his stories; so that every one thought Jack was much the greater favourite—so he was as a companion in frolic, and foolery, and *pleasure*, as it is called; but he would not trust him with an inch of leather or sixpence in money: No, no—when business was to be done, or trust was to be reposed, James was the man: the idle and the drunken never trust one another, if they have common sense. They like to laugh, and sing, and riot, and drink together, but when they want a friend, a counsellor, a helper in business or in trouble, they go farther afield; and Williams, while he would drink with Jack, would trust James with untold gold; and even was foolishly tempted to neglect his business the more from knowing that he had one at home who was taking care of it.

In spite of all James's care and diligence, however, things were growing worse and worse; the more James saved, the more his master and mistress spent. One morning, just as the shop was opened, and James had set every body to their respective work, and he himself was settling the business for the day, he found that his master was not yet come from the Grayhound. As this was now become a common case, he only grieved but did not wonder at it. While he was indulging sad thoughts on what would be the end of all this, in ran the tapster from the rayhound out of breath, and with a look of terror and dismay, desired James would step over to the public house with him that moment, for that his master wanted him.

James went immediately, surprised at this unusual message. When he got into the kitchen of the public house, which he now entered for the first time in his life, though it was just opposite to the house in which he lived, he was hocked at the beastly disgusting appearance of every thing he beheld. There was a table covered with tankards, punch-bowls, broken glasses, pipes, and dirty greasy packs of cards, and all over wet with liquor; the floor was strewed with broken earthen cups, odd cards, and an EO table which had been shivered to pieces in a quarrel; behind the table stood a crowd of dirty fellows, with matted locks, hollow eyes, and faces smeared with tobacco; James made his way after the tapster, through this wretched looking crew, to a settle which stood in the chimney corner. Not a word was uttered, but the silent horror seemed to denote something more than a mere common drunken bout.

What was the dismay of James, when he saw his miserable master stretched out on the settle, in all the agonies of death! He had fallen into a fit; after having drunk hard best part of the night, and seemed to have but a few minutes to live. In his frightful countenance, was displayed the dreadful picture of sin and death, for he struggled at once under the guilt of intoxication, and the pangs of a dying man. He recovered his senses for a few moments, and called out to ask if his faithful servant was come.—James went up to him, took him by his cold hand, but was too much moved to speak.—'Oh! James, James,' cried he in a broken voice, 'pray for me, comfort me.' James spoke kindly to him, but was too honest to give him false comfort, as is too often done by mistaken friends in these dreadful moments.

'James,' said he, 'I have been a bad master to you—you would have saved me, soul and body, but I would not let you—I have ruined my wife, my children, and my own soul. Take warning, oh, take warning by my miserable end,' said he to his stupified companions: but none were able to attend to him but James, who bid him lift up his heart to God, and prayed heartily for him himself. 'Oh!' said the dying man, 'it is too late, too late for me—but you have still time,' said he to the half-drunken terrified crew around him. 'Where is Jack?' Jack Brown came forward, but was too much frightened to speak. 'O wretched boy!' said he, 'I fear I shall have the ruin of thy soul, as well as my own to answer for. Stop short!—Take warning—now in the days of thy youth. O James, James, thou dost not pray for me. Death is dreadful to the wicked—O the sting of death to a guilty conscience!' Here he lifted up his ghastly eyes in speechless horror, grasped hard at the hand of James; gave a deep hollow groan, and closed his eyes, never to open them but in an awful eternity.

This was death in all its horrors! the gay companions of his sinful pleasures, could not stand the sight; all slunk away like guilty thieves from their late favourite friend—no one was left to assist him, but his two apprentices. Brown was not so hardened but that he shed many tears for his unhappy master; and even made some hasty resolutions of amendment, which were too soon forgotten.

While Brown stepped home to call the workmen to come and assist in removing their poor master, James staid alone with the corpse, and employed those awful moments in indulging the most serious thoughts, and praying heartily to God, that so terrible a lesson might not be thrown away upon him; but that he might be enabled to live in a constant state of preparation for death.—The resolutions he made at this moment, as they were not made in his own strength, but in an humble reliance on God's gracious help, were of use to him as long as he lived; and if ever he was for a moment tempted to say, or do a wrong thing, the remembrance of his poor dying master's last agonies, and the dreadful words he uttered, always operated as an instant check upon him.

When Williams was buried, and his affairs came to be inquired into, they were found to be in a sad condition. His wife, indeed, was the less to be pitied, as she had contributed her full share to the common ruin. James, however, did pity her, and by his skill in accounts, his known honesty, and the trust the creditors put in his word, things came to be settled rather better than Mrs. Williams expected.

Both Brown and James were now within a month or two of being out of their time. The creditors, as was said before, employed James to settle his late master's accounts, which he did in a manner so creditable to his abilities, and his honesty, that they proposed to him to take the shop himself. He assured them it was utterly out of his power for want of money. As the creditors had not the least fear of being repaid, if it should please God to spare his life, they generously agreed among themselves to advance him a small sum of money without any security but his bond; for this he was to pay a very reasonable interest, and to return the whole in a given number of years. James shed tears of gratitude at this testimony to his character, and could hardly be prevailed on to accept their kindness, so great was his dread of being in debt.

He took the remainder of the lease from his mistress; and in settling affairs with her, took care to make every thing as advantageous to her as possible. He never once allowed himself to think how unkind she had been to him; he only saw in her the needy widow of his deceased master, and the distressed mother of an infant family; and was heartily sorry it was not in his power to contribute to their support; it was not only James's duty, but his delight, to return good for evil—for he was a Christian.

James Stock was now, by the blessing of God on his own earnest endeavours, master of a considerable shop, and was respected by the whole town for his prudence, honesty, and piety. How he behaved in his new station, and also what befel his comrade Brown, must be the subject of another book; and I hope my readers will look forward with some impatience for some further account of this worthy young man. In the meantime, other apprentices will do well to follow so praiseworthy an example, and to remember, that the respectable master of a large shop, and of a profitable business, was raised to that creditable situation, without money, friends, or connexions, from the low beginning of a parish apprentice, by sobriety, industry, the fear of God, and, an obedience to the divine principles of the Christian religion.

PART II.

The Apprentice turned Master.

The first part of this history left off with the dreadful sudden death of Williams the idle shoemaker, who died in a drunken fit at the Grayhound. It also showed how James Stock, his faithful apprentice, by his honest and upright behaviour, so gained the love and respect of his late master's creditors, that they set him up in business, though he was not worth a shilling of his own—such is the power of a good character!

And when we last parted from him he had just got possession of his master's shop.

This sudden prosperity was a time of trial for James; who, as he was now become a creditable tradesman, I shall hereafter think proper to call Mr. James Stock. I say, this sudden rise in life was a time of trial; for we hardly know what we are ourselves till we become our own masters. There is indeed always a reasonable hope that a good servant will not make a bad master, and that a faithful apprentice will prove an honest tradesman. But the heart of man is deceitful; and some folks who seem to behave very well while they are under subjection, no sooner get a little power than their heads are turned, and they grow prouder than those who are gentlemen born. They forget at once that they were lately poor and dependant themselves, so that one would think that with their poverty they had lost their memory too. I have known some who had suffered most hardships in their early days, become the most hard and oppressive in their turn: so that they seem to forget that fine considerate reason which God gives to the children of Israel why they should be merciful to their servants, *remembering*, said he, *that thou thyself was a bond-man.*

Young Mr. Stock did not so forget himself. He had indeed the only sure guard from falling into this error. It was not from any uneasiness in his natural disposition: for that only just serves to make folks good-natured when they are pleased, and patient when they have nothing to vex them.—James went upon higher ground. He brought his religion into all his actions; he did not give way to abusive language, because he knew it was a sin. He did not use his apprentices ill, because he knew he had himself a Master in heaven.

He knew he owed his present happy situation to the kindness of the creditors. But did he grow easy and careless because he knew he had such friends? No indeed. He worked with double diligence in order to get out of debt, and to let these friends see he did not abuse their kindness. Such behaviour as this is the greatest encouragement in the world to rich people to lend a little money. It creates friends, and it keeps them.

His shoes and boots were made in the best manner; this *got* him business; he set out with a rule to tell no lies, and deceive no customers; this *secured* his business. He had two reasons for not promising to send home goods when he knew he should not be able to keep his word. The first, because he knew a lie was a sin, the next, because it was a folly. There is no credit sooner worn out than that which is gained by false pretences. After a little while no one is deceived by them. Falsehood is so soon detected, that I believe most tradesmen are the poorer for it in the long rung. Deceit is the worst part of a shopkeeper's stock in trade.

James was now at the head of a family.—This is a serious situation, (said he to himself, one fine summer's evening, as he stood leaning over the half-door of his shop to enjoy a little fresh air) I am now master of a family. My cares are doubled, and so are my duties. I see the higher one gets in life the more one has to answer for. Let me now call to mind the sorrow I used to feel when I was made to carry work home on a Sunday by an ungodly master: and let me now *keep* the resolution I then formed.

So what his heart found right to do, he resolved to do quickly; and he set out at first as he meant to go on. The Sunday was truly a day of rest at Mr. Stock's. He would not allow a pair of shoes to be given out on that day to oblige the best customer he had. And what did he lose by it? Why nothing. For when the people were once used to it, they liked Saturday night just as well. But had it been otherwise he would have given up his gains to his conscience.

Showing how Mr. Stock behaved to his apprentices.

When he got up in the world so far as to have apprentices, he thought himself as accountable for their behaviour as if they had been his children. He was very kind to them, and had a cheerful merry way of talking to them, so that the lads who had seen too much of swearing, reprobate masters, were fond of him. They were never afraid of speaking to him; they told him all their little troubles, and considered their master as their best friend, for they said they would do any thing for a good word and a kind look. As he did not swear at them when they had been guilty of a fault, they did not lie to him to conceal it, and thereby make one fault two. But though he was very kind, he was very watchful also, for he did not think neglect any part of kindness. He brought them to adopt one very pretty method, which was, on a Sunday evening to divert themselves with writing out half a dozen texts of Scripture in a neat copy-book with gilt covers. You have the same at any of the stationers; they do not cost above fourpence, and will last nearly a year.

When the boys carried him their books, he justly commended him whose texts were written in the fairest hand. 'And now my boys,' said he, 'let us see which of you will learn your texts best in the course of the week; he who does this shall choose for next Sunday.' Thus the boys soon got many psalms and chapters by heart, almost without knowing how they came by them. He taught them how to make a practical use of what they learnt: 'for,' said he, 'it will answer little purposes to learn texts if we do not try to live up to them.' One of the boys being apt to play in his absence, and to run back again to his work when he heard his master's step, he brought him to a sense of his fault by the last Sunday's text, which happened to be the sixth of Ephesians. He showed him what was meant by *being obedient to his master in singleness of heart as unto Christ*, and explained to him with so much kindness what it was, *not to work with eye-service as men pleasers, but doing the will of God from the heart*, that the lad said he should never forget it, and it did more towards curing him of idleness than the soundest horse-whipping would have done.

How Mr. Stock got out of debt.

Stock's behaviour was very regular, and he was much beloved for his kind and peaceable

temper. He had also a good reputation for skill in his trade, and his industry was talked of through the whole town, so that he had soon more work than he could possibly do. He paid all his dealers to the very day, and took care to carry his interest money to the creditors the moment it became due. In two or three years he was able to begin to pay off a small part of the principal. His reason for being so eager to pay money as soon as it became due, was this:—He had observed tradesmen, and especially his old master, put off the day of payment as long as they could, even though they had the means of paying in their power. This deceived them: for having money in their pockets they forgot it belonged to the creditor, and not to themselves, and so got to fancy they were rich when they were really poor. This false notion led them to indulge in idle expenses, whereas, if they had paid regularly, they would have had this one temptation the less: a young tradesman, when he is going to spend money, should at least ask himself, 'Whether this money is his own or his creditors?' This little question might help to prevent many a bankruptcy.

A true Christian always goes heartily to work to find out what is his besetting sin; and when he has found it (which he easily may if he looks sharp) against this sin he watches narrowly. Now I know it is the fashion among some folks, (and a bad fashion it is,) to fancy that good people have no sin; but this only shows their ignorance. It is not true. That good man, St. Paul, knew better.* And when men do not own their sins, it is not because their is no sin in their hearts, but because they are not anxious to search for it, nor humble to confess it, nor penitent to mourn over it. But this was not the case with James Stock. 'Examine yourselves truly,' said he, 'is no bad part of the catechism.' He began to be afraid that his desire of living creditably, and without being a burden to any one, might, under the mask of honesty and independence, lead him into pride and covetousness. He feared that the bias of his heart lay that way. So instead of being proud of his sobriety; instead of bragging that he never spent his money idly, nor went to the alehouse; instead of boasting how hard he worked and how he denied himself, he strove in secret that even these good qualities might not grow out of a wrong root. The following event was of use to him in the way of indulging any disposition to covetousness.

One evening as he was standing at the door of his shop a poor dirty boy, without stockings and shoes, came up and asked him for a bit of broken victuals, for he had eaten nothing all day. In spite of his dirt and rags he was a very pretty, lively, civil spoken boy, and Mr. Stock could not help thinking he knew something of his face. He fetched him out a good piece of bread and cheese, and while the boy was devouring it, asked him if he had no parents, and why he went about in that vagabond manner? 'Daddy has been dead some years,' said the boy; 'he died in a fit over at the Grayhound. Mammy says he used to live at this shop, and then we did not want for clothes nor victuals neither.' Stock was melted almost to tears on finding that this dirty beggar-boy was Tommy Williams, the son of his old master. He blessed God on comparing his own happy condition with that of this poor destitute child, but he was not prouder at the comparison; and while he was thankful for his own prosperity, he pitied the helpless boy. 'Where have you been living of late?' said he to him, 'for I understand you all went home to your mother's friends.'—'So we did, sir,' said the boy, 'but they are grown tired of maintaining us, because they said that mammy spent all the money which should have gone to buy victuals for us, on snuff and drams. And so they have sent us back to this place, which is daddy's parish.'

'And where do you live here?' said Mr. Stock. 'O sir, we are all put into the parish poor-house.'—'And does your mother do any thing to help to maintain you?'—'No, sir, for mammy says she was not brought up to work like poor folks, and she would rather starve than spin or knit; so she lies a-bed all the morning, and sends us about to pick up what we can, a bit of victuals or a few half-pence.'—'And have you any money in your pocket now?'—'Yes, sir, I have got three half-pence which I have begged to-day.'—'Then, as you were so very hungry, how came you not to buy a roll at that baker's over the way?'—'Because, sir, I was going to lay it out in tea for mammy, for I never lay out a farthing for myself. Indeed mammy says she *will* have her tea twice a-day if we beg or starve for it.'—'Can you read my boy?' said Mr. Stock:—'A little, sir, and say my prayers too.'—'And can you say your catechism?'—'I have almost forgotten it all, sir, though I remember something about *honouring my father and mother*, and that makes me still carry the halfpence home to mammy instead of buying cakes.'—'Who taught you these good things?'—'One Jemmy Stock, sir, who was a parish 'prentice to my daddy. He taught me one question out of the catechism every night, and always made me say my prayers to him before I went to bed. He told me I should go to the wicked place if I did not fear God, so I am still afraid to tell lies like the other boys. Poor Jemmy gave me a piece of ginger bread every time I learnt well; but I have no friend now; Jemmy was very good to me, though mammy did nothing but beat him.'

Mr. Stock was too much moved to carry on the discourse; he did not make himself known to the boy, but took him over to the baker's shop: as they walked along he could not help repeating aloud a verse or two of that beautiful hymn so deservedly the favourite of all children.

> 'Not more than others I deserve,
> Yet God hath given me more;
> For I have food while others starve,
> Or beg from door to door.'

The little boy looked up in his face, saying, 'Why, sir, that's the very hymn which Jemmy Stock gave me a penny for learning.' Stock made no answer, but put a couple of threepenny loaves into his hand to carry home, and told him to call on him again at such a time in the following week.

* See Romans, vii.

How Mr. Stock contrived to be charitable without any expense.

Stock had abundant subject for meditation that night. He was puzzled what to do with the boy. While he was carrying on his trade upon borrowed money, he did not think it right to give any part of that money to assist the idle, or even to help the distressed. 'I must be just,' said he, 'before I am generous.' Still he could not bear to see this fine boy given up to a certain ruin. He did not think it safe to take him into his shop in his present ignorant unprincipled state. At last he hit upon this thought: I work for myself twelve hours in the day. Why shall I not work one hour or two for this boy in the evening? It will be but for a year, and I shall then have more right to do what I please. My money will then be my own, I shall have paid my debts.

So he began to put his resolution in practice that very night, sticking to his old notion of not putting off till to-morrow what should be done to-day; and it was thought he owed much of his success in life, as well as his growth in goodness, to this little saying: 'I am young and healthy,' said he, 'one hour's work more will do me no harm; I will set aside all I get by these over-hours, and put the boy to school. I have not only no right to punish this child for the sins of his father, but I consider that though God hated those sins, he has made them to be instrumental to my advancement.'

Tommy Williams called at the time appointed. In the mean time Mr. Stock's maid had made him a neat little suit of clothes out of an old coat of her master's. She had also knit him a pair of stockings, and Mr. Stock made him sit down in the shop, while he fitted him with a pair of new shoes. The maid having washed and dressed him, Mr. Stock took him by the hand, and walked along with him to the parish poor-house to find his mother. They found her dressed in ragged filthy finery, standing at the door, where she passed most of her time, quarrelling with half a dozen women as idle and dirty as herself. When she saw Tommy so neat and well-dressed, she fell a crying for joy. She said 'it put her in mind of old times, for Tommy always used to be dressed like a gentleman.'—'So much the worse,' said Mr. Stock; 'if you had not begun by making him look like a gentleman, you needed not have ended by making him look like a beggar.' 'Oh Jem!' said she, (for though it was four years since she had seen him, she soon recollected him) 'fine times for you! set a beggar on horseback—you know the proverb. I shall beat Tommy well for finding you out and exposing me to you.'

Instead of entering into any dispute with this bad woman, or praising himself at her expense; instead of putting her in mind of her past ill behaviour to him, or reproaching her with the bad use she had made of her prosperity, he mildly said to her,—'Mrs. Williams I am sorry for your misfortunes; I am come to relieve you of part of your burden. I will take Tommy off your hands. I will give him a year's board and schooling, and by that time I shall see what he is fit for. I will promise nothing, but if the boy turns out well, I will never forsake him I shall make but one bargain with you, which is, that he must not come to this place to hear all this railing and swearing, nor shall he keep, company with these pilfering idle children. You are welcome to go and see him when you please, but here he must not come.'

The foolish woman burst out a crying, saying, 'she should lose her poor dear Tommy for ever. Mr. Stock might give *her* the money he intended to pay at the school, for nobody could do so well by him as his own mother.' The truth was, she wanted to get these new clothes, into her clutches, which would all have been pawned at the dram-shop before the week was out. This Mr. Stock well knew. From crying she fell to scolding and swearing. She told him he was an unnatural wretch, that wanted to make a child despise his own mother because she was poor. She even went so far as to say she would not part from him; she said she hated your godly people, they had no bowels of compassion, but tried to set men, women, and children against their own flesh and blood.

Mr. Stock now almost lost his patience, and for one moment a thought came across him, to strip the boy, carry back the clothes, and leave him to his unnatural mother. 'Why,' said he, 'should I work over-hours, and wear out my strength for this wicked woman?' But soon he checked this thought, by reflecting on the patience and long-suffering of God with rebellious sinners. This cured his anger in a moment, and he mildly reasoned with her on the folly and blindness in opposing the good of her child.

One of the neighbours who stood by said, 'What a fine thing it was for the boy! but some people were born to be lucky. She wished Mr. Stock would take a fancy to *her* child, he should have him soon enough.' Mrs. Williams now began to be frightened lest Mr. Stock should take the woman at her word, and sullenly consented to let the boy go, from envy and malice, not from prudence and gratitude; and Tommy was sent to school that very night, his mother crying and roaring instead of thanking God for such a blessing.

And here I cannot forbear telling a very good-natured thing of Will Simpson, one of the workmen. By the by it was that very young fellow who was reformed by Stock's good example, when he was an apprentice, and who used to sing psalms with him on a Sunday evening, when they got out of the way of Williams's junketing. Will coming home early one evening was surprised to find his master at work by himself, long after the usual time. He begged so heartily to know the reason, that Stock owned the truth. Will was so struck with this piece of kindness, that he snatched up a last, crying out, 'Well, master, you shall not work by yourself however; we will go snacks in maintaining Tommy: it shall never be said that Will Simpson was idling about when his master was working for charity.' This made the hour pass cheerfully, and doubled the profits.

In a year or two Mr. Stock, by God's blessing on his labours, became quite clear of the world. He now paid off his creditors, but he never forgot his obligation to them, and found

many opportunities of showing kindness to them, and to their children after them. He now cast about for a proper wife, and as he was thought a prosperous man, and was very well looking besides, most of the smart girls of the place, with their tawdry finery, used to be often parading before the shop, and would even go to church in order to put themselves in his way. But Mr. Stock when he went to church, had other things in his head; and if ever he thought about these gay damsels at all, it was with concern in seeing them so improperly tricked out, so that the very means they took to please him made him dislike them.

There was one Betsy West, a young woman of excellent character, and very modest appearance. He had seldom seen her out, as she was employed night and day in waiting on an aged, widowed mother, who was both lame and blind. This good girl was indeed almost literally eyes and feet to her helpless parent, and Mr. Stock used to see her, through the little casement window, lifting her up, and feeding with a tenderness which greatly raised his esteem for her. He used to tell Will Simpson, as they sat at work, that such a dutiful daughter could hardly help to make a faithful wife. He had not, however, the heart to try to draw her off from her care of her sick mother. The poor woman declined very fast. Betsy was much employed in reading or praying by her, while she was awake, and passed a good part of the night while she slept, in doing some fine works to sell, in order to supply her sick mother with little delicacies which their poor pittance could not afford, while she herself lived on a crust.

Mr. Stock knew that Betsy would have little or nothing after her mother's death, as she had only a life income. On the other hand, Mr. Thompson, the tanner, had offered him two hundred pounds with his daughter Nancy; but he was almost sorry that he had not in this case an opportunity of resisting his natural bias, which rather lay on the side of loving money: 'For,' said he, 'putting principle and putting affection out of the question, I shall do a more prudent thing by marrying Betsy West, who will conform to her station, and is a religious, humble, industrious girl, without a shilling, than by having an idle dressy lass, who will neglect my family and fill my house with company, though she should have twice the fortune which Nancy Thompson would bring.'

At length poor old Mrs. West was released from all her sufferings. At a proper time Mr. Stock proposed marriage to Betsy, and was accepted. All the disappointed girls in the town wondered what any body could like in such a dowdy as that. Had the man no eyes? They thought Mr. Stock had had more taste. Oh! how did it provoke all the vain idle things to find, that staying at home, dressing plainly, serving God, and nursing a blind mother, should do that for Betsy West, which all their contrivances, flaunting, and dancing, could not do for them.

He was not disappointed in his hope of meeting with a good wife in Betsy, as indeed those who marry on right grounds seldom are. But if religious persons will, for the sake of money, choose partners for life who have no religion, do not let them complain that they are unhappy; they might have known that beforehand

Tommy Williams was now taken home to Stock's house and bound apprentice. He was always kind and attentive to his mother; and every penny which Will Simpson or his master, gave him for learning a chapter, he would save to buy a bit of tea and sugar for her. When the other boys laughed at him for being so foolish as to deny himself cakes and apples to give his money to her who was so bad a woman, he would answer, 'It may be so, but she is my mother for all that.'

Mr. Stock was much moved at the change in this boy, who turned out a very good youth. He resolved, as God should prosper him, that he would try to snatch other helpless creatures from sin and ruin. 'For,' said he, 'it is owing to God's blessing on the instructions of my good minister when I was a child, that I have been saved from the broad way of destruction.'—He still gave God the glory of every thing he did aright: and when Will Simpson one day said to him, 'Master, I wish I were half as good as you are.' 'Hold, William,' answered he gravely, 'I once read in a book, that the devil is willing enough we should appear to do good actions, if he can but make us proud of them.'

But we must not forget our other old acquaintance, Mr. Stock's fellow 'prentice. So next month you may expect a full account of the many tricks and frolics of idle Jack Brown.

PART III.

Some account of the frolics of idle Jack Brown.

You shall now hear what befel idle Jack Brown, who, being a farmer's son, had many advantages to begin life with. But he who wants prudence may be said to want every thing, because he turns all his advantages to no account.

Jack Brown was just out of his time when his master Williams died in that terrible drunken fit at the Grayhound. You know already how Stock succeeded to his master's business, and prospered in it. Jack wished very much to enter into partnership with him. His father and mother too were desirous of it, and offered to advance a hundred pounds with him. Here is a fresh proof of the power of character! The old farmer, with all his covetousness, was eager to get his son into partnership with Stock, though the latter was not worth a shilling; and even Jack's mother, with all her pride, was eager for it, for they had both sense enough to see it would be the making of Jack. The father knew that Stock would look to the main chance; and the mother that he would take the labouring oar, and so her darling would have little to do. The ruling passion operated in both. One parent wished to secure to the son a life of pleasure, the other a profitable trade. Both were equally indifferent to whatever related to his eternal good.

Stock, however, young as he was, was too old a bird to be caught with chaff. His wisdom

was an overmatch for their cunning. He had a kindness for Brown, but would on no account enter into business with him.—'One of these three things,' said he, 'I am sure will happen if I do; he will either hurt my principles, my character, or my trade; perhaps all.' And here by-the-by, let me drop a hint to other young men who are about to enter into partnership. Let them not do that in haste which they may repent at leisure. Next to marriage it is a tie the hardest to break; and next to that it is an engagement which ought to be entered into with the most caution. Many things go to the making such a connexion suitable, safe, and pleasant.—There is many a rich merchant need not be above taking a hint in this respect, from James Stock the shoemaker.

Brown was still unwilling to part from him; indeed he was too idle to look out for business, so he offered Stock to work with him as a journeyman, but this he also mildly refused. It hurt his good-nature to do so; but he reflected that a young man who has his way to make in the world must not only be good-natured, he must be prudent also. 'I am resolved,' said he, 'to employ none but the most sober, regular young men I can get. Evil communications corrupt good manners, and I should be answerable for all the disorders of my house, if I knowingly took a wild drinking young fellow into it. That which might be kindness to one, would be injustice to many, and therefore a sin in myself.'

Brown's mother was in a great rage when she heard that her son had stooped so low as to make this offer.—She valued herself on being proud, for she thought pride was a grand thing. Poor woman! She did not know that it is the meanest thing in the world. It was her ignorance which made her proud, as is apt to be the case.—'You mean-spirited rascal,' said she to Jack, 'I had rather follow you to your grave, as well as I love you, than see you disgrace your family by working under Jem Stock, the parish apprentice.' She forgot already what pains she had taken about the partnership, but pride and passion have bad memories.

It is hard to say which was now uppermost in her mind, her desire to be revenged on Stock, or to see her son make a figure. She raised every shilling she could get from her husband, and all she could crib from the dairy to set up Jack in a showy way. So the very next market day she came herself, and took for him the new white house, with the two little sash windows painted blue, and blue posts before the door. It is that house which has the old cross just before it, as you turn down between the church and the Grayhound. Its being so near the church to be sure was no recommendation to Jack, but its being so near the Grayhound was, and so taking one thing with the other it was to be sure no bad situation; but what weighed most with the mother was, that it was a much more showy shop than Stock's; and the house, though not half so convenient, was far more smart.

In order to draw custom, his foolish mother advised him to undersell his neighbours just at first; to buy ordinary but showy goods, and to employ cheap workmen. In short she charged him to leave no stone unturned to ruin his old comrade Stock. Indeed she always thought with double satisfaction of Jack's prosperity, because she always joined to it the hope that his success would be the ruin of Stock, for she owned it would be the joy of her heart to bring that proud upstart to a morsel of bread. She did not understand, for her part, why such beggars must become tradesmen; it was making a velvet purse of a sow's ear.

Stock, however, set out on quite another set of principles. He did not allow himself to square his own behaviour to others by theirs to him. He seldom asked himself what he should *like* to to do: but he had a mighty way of saying, I wonder now what is my *duty* to do?—And when he was once clear in that matter he generally did it, always begging God's blessing and direction. So instead of setting Brown at defiance; instead of all that vulgar selfishness, of catch he that catch can—and two of a trade can never agree—he resolved to be friendly towards him. Instead of joining in the laugh against Brown for making his house so fine, he was sorry for him, because he feared he would never be able to pay such a rent. He very kindly called upon him, told him there was business enough for them both, and gave him many useful hints for his going on. He warned him to go oftener to church and seldomer to the Grayhound: put him in mind how following the one and forsaking the other had been the ruin of their poor master, and added the following

ADVICE TO YOUNG TRADESMEN.

Buy the best goods; cut the work out yourself; let the eye of the master be every where; employ the soberest men; avoid all the low deceits of trade; never lower the credit of another to raise your own; make short payments; keep exact accounts; avoid idle company, and be very strict to your word.

For a short time things went on swimmingly. Brown was merry and civil. The shop was well situated for gossip; and every one who had something to say, and nothing to do was welcome. Every idle story was first spread, and every idle song first sung, in Brown's shop. Every customer who came to be measured was promised that his shoes should be done first. But the misfortune was, if twenty came in a day the same promise was made to all; so that nineteen were disappointed, and of course affronted. He never said *no* to any one. It is indeed a word which it requires some honesty to pronounce. By all these false promises he was thought the most obliging fellow that ever made a shoe. And as he set out on the principle of underselling, people took a mighty fancy to the cheap shop. And it was agreed among all the young and giddy, that he would beat Stock hollow, and that the old shop would soon be knocked up.

All is not gold that glistens.

After a few months, however, folks began to be not quite so fond of the cheap shop; one found out that the leather was bad, another that the work was slight. Those who liked substantial goods went all of them to Stock's, for they said Brown's heel taps did not last a week; his

new boots let in water; and they believed he made his soles of brown paper. Besides, it was thought by most, that this promising all, and keeping his word with none, hurt his business as much as any thing. Indeed, I question, putting religion out of the question, if lying ever answers, even in a political view.

Brown had what is commonly called *good heart;* that is, he had a thoughtless good nature, and a sort of feeling for the moment which made him very sorry when others were in trouble. But he was not apt to put himself to any inconvenience, nor go a step out of his way, nor give up any pleasure to serve the best friend he had. He loved *fun;* and those who do should always see that it be harmless, and that they do not give up more for it than it is worth. I am not going to say a word against innocent merriment. I like it myself. But what the proverb says of gold, may be said of mirth; it may be bought too dear. If a young man finds that what he fancies is a good joke may possibly offend God, hurt his neighbour, afflict his parent, or make a modest girl blush, let him then be assured it is not fun, but wickedness, and he had better let it alone.

Jack Brown then, as *good a heart* as he had, did not know what it was to deny himself any thing. He was so *good-natured* indeed, that he never in his life refused to make one of a jolly set; but he was not good-natured enough to consider that those men whom he kept up all night roaring and laughing, had wives and children at home, who had little to eat, and less to wear, because *they* were keeping up the character of merry fellows, and good hearts at the public house.

The Mountebank.

One day he saw his father's plough-boy come galloping up to the door in great haste. This boy brought Brown word that his mother was dangerously ill, and that his father had sent his own best bay mare Smiler, that his son might lose no time, but set out directly to see his mother before she died.—Jack burst into tears, lamented the danger of so fond a mother, and all the people in the shop extolled his *good heart.*

He sent back the boy directly, with a message that he would follow him in half an hour, as soon as the mare had baited: for he well knew that his father would not thank him for any haste he might make if Smiler was hurt.

Jack accordingly set off, and rode with such speed to the next town, that both himself and Smiler had a mind to another bait. They stopped at the Star: unluckily it was fair-day, and as he was walking about while Smiler was eating her oats, a bill was put into his hand setting forth, that on a stage opposite the Globe a mountebank was showing away, and his Andrew performing the finest tricks that ever were seen. He read—he stood still—he went on—'It will not hinder me,' says he; 'Smiler must rest; and I shall see my poor dear mother quite as soon if I just take a peep, as if I sit moping at the Star.'

The tricks were so merry that the time seemed short, and when they were over he could not forbear going into the Globe and treating these choice spirits with a bowl of punch. Just as they were taking the last glass Jack happened to say that he was the best fives player in the country. 'That is lucky,' said the Andrew 'for there is a famous match now playing in the court, and you may never again have such an opportunity to show your skill.' Brown declared 'he could not stay, for that he had left his horse at the Star, and must set off on urgent business.' They now all pretended to call his skill in question. This roused his pride, and he thought another half hour could break no squares. Smiler had now had a good feed of corn, and he would only have to push her on a little more; so to it he went.

He won the first game. This spurred him on; and he played till it was so dark they could not see a ball. Another bowl was called for from the winner. Wagers and bets now drained Brown not only of all the money he had won, but of all he had in his pocket, so that he was obliged to ask leave to go to the house where his horse was, to borrow enough to discharge his reckoning at the Globe.

All these losses brought his poor dear mother to his mind, and he marched off with rather a heavy heart to borrow the money, and to order Smiler out of the stable. The landlord expressed much surprise at seeing him, and the ostler declared there was no Smiler there; that he had been rode off above two hours ago by the merry Andrew, who said he come by order of the owner, Mr. Brown, to fetch him to the Globe, and to pay for his feed. It was indeed one of the neatest tricks the Andrew ever performed, for he made such a clean conveyance of Smiler, that neither Jack nor his father ever heard of her again.

It was night: no one could tell what road the Andrew took, and it was another hour or two before an advertisement could be drawn up for apprehending the horse-stealer. Jack had some doubts whether he should go on or return back. He knew that though his father might fear his wife most, yet he loved Smiler best. At length he took that courage from a glass of brandy which he ought to have taken from a hearty repentance, and he resolved to pursue his journey. He was obliged to leave his watch and silver buckles in pawn for a little old hack which was nothing but skin and bone, and would hardly trot three miles an hour.

He knocked at his father's door about five in the morning. The family were all up.—He asked the boy who opened the door how his mother was? 'She is dead,' said the boy; 'she died yesterday afternoon.' Here Jack's heart smote him, and he cried aloud, partly from grief, but more from the reproaches of his own conscience, for he found by computing the hours, that had he come straight on, he should have been in time to receive his mother's blesing.

The farmer now came from within, 'I hear Smiler's step. Is Jack come?'—'Yes, father,' said Jack, in a low voice. 'Then,' cried the farmer, 'run every man and boy of you and take care of the mare. Tom, do thou go and rub her down; Jem, run and get her a good feed of corn. Be sure walk her about that she may not catch cold.' Young Brown came in.

'Are you not an undutiful dog? said the father; 'you might have been here twelve hours ago. Your mother could not die in peace without seeing you. She said it was cruel return for all her fondness that you could not make a little haste to see her; but it was always so, for she had wronged her other children to help you, and this was her reward.' Brown sobbed out a few words, but his father replied, 'Never cry Jack, for the boy told me that it was out of regard for Smiler, that you were not here as soon as he was; and if 'twas your over care of her, why there's no great harm done. You could not have saved your poor mother, and you might have hurt the mare.' Here Jack's double guilt flew into his face. He knew that his father was very covetous, and had lived on bad terms with his wife; and also that his own unkindness to her had been forgiven by him out of love to the horse; but to break to him how he had lost that horse through his own folly and want of feeling, was more than Jack had courage to do. The old man, however, soon got at the truth, and no words can describe his fury. Forgetting that his wife lay dead above stairs, he abused his son in a way not fit to be repeated; and though his covetousness had just before found an excuse for a favourite son neglecting to visit a dying parent, yet he now vented his rage against Jack as an unnatural brute, whom he would cut off with a shilling, and bade him never see his face again.

Jack was not allowed to attend his mother's funeral, which was a real grief to him; nor would his father advance even the little money which was needful to redeem his things at the Star. He had now no fond mother to assist him, and he set out on his return home on his borrowed hack, full of grief. He had the added mortification of knowing, that he had also lost by his folly a little hoard of money which his mother had saved up for him.

When Brown got back to his own town he found that the story of Smiler and the Andrew had got thither before him, and it was thought a very good joke at the Grayhound. He soon recovered his spirits as far as related to the horse, but as to his behaviour to his dying mother it troubled him at times to the last day of his life, though he did all he could to forget it. He did not however go on at all better, nor did he engage in one frolic the less for what had passed at the Globe; his *good heart* continually betrayed him into acts of levity and vanity.

Jack began at length to feel the reverse of that proverb, *Keep your shop and your shop will keep you.* He had neglected his customers, and they forsook him. Quarter-day came round; there was much to pay and little to receive. He owed two years' rent. He was in arrears to his men for wages. He had a long account with his currier. It was in vain to apply to his father. He had now no mother. Stock was the only true friend he had in the world, and had helped him out of many petty scrapes, but he knew Stock would advance no money in so hopeless a case. Duns came fast about him. He named a speedy day for payment; but as soon as they were out of the house, and the danger put off to a little distance, he forgot every promise, was as merry as ever, and run the same round of thoughtless gaiety. Whenever he was in trouble Stock did not shun him, because that was the moment to throw in a little good advice. He one day asked him if he always intended to go on in this course?' 'No, said he, 'I am resolved by and by to reform, grow sober, and go to church. Why I am but five and twenty, man, I am stout and healthy, and likely to live long; I can repent, and grow melancholy and good at any time.'

'Oh Jack!' said Stock, 'don't cheat thyself with that false hope. What thou dost intend to do, do quickly. Did'st thou never read about the heart growing hardened by long indulgence in sin? Some folk, who pretend to mean well, show that they mean nothing at all, by never beginning to put their good resolutions into practice; which made a wise man once say, that hell is paved with good intentions. We cannot repent when we please. *It is the goodness of God which leadeth us to repentance.*'

'I am sure,' replied Jack, 'I am no one's enemy but my own.'

'It is as foolish,' said Stock, 'to say a bad man is no one's enemy but his own, as that a good man is no one's friend but his own. There is no such neutral character. A bad man corrupts or offends all within reach of his example, just as a good man benefits or instructs all within the sphere of his influence. And there is no time when we can say that this transmitted good and evil will end. A wicked man may be punished for sins he never committed himself, if he has been the cause of sin in others, as surely as a saint will be rewarded for more good deeds that he himself has done, even for the virtues and good actions of all those who are made better by his instruction, his example, or his writings.'

Michaelmas-day was at hand. The landlord declared he would be put off no longer, but would seize for rent if it was not paid him on that day, as well as for a considerable sum due to him for leather. Brown at last began to be frightened. He applied to Stock to be bound for him. This, Stock flatly refused. Brown now began to dread the horrors of a jail, and really seemed so very contrite, and made so many vows and promises of amendment, that at length Stock was prevailed on, together with two or three of Brown's other friends, to advance each a small sum of money to quiet the landlord, Brown promising to make over to them every part of his stock, and to be guided in future by their advice, declaring that he would turn over a new leaf, and follow Mr. Stock's example, as well as his direction in every thing.

Stock's good nature was at length wrought upon, and he raised the money. The truth is, he did not know the worst, nor how deeply Brown was involved. Brown joyfully set out on the very quarter-day to a town at some distance, to carry his landlord this money, raised by the imprudent kindness of his friend. At his departure Stock put him in mind of the old story of Smiler and the Merry Andrew, and he promised of his own head that he would not even call at a public house till he had paid the

He was as good as his word. He very triumphantly passed by several. He stopped a little under the window of one where the sounds of merriment and loud laughter caught his ear. At another he heard the enticing notes of a fiddle and the light heels of the merry dancers. Here his heart had well nigh failed him, but the dread of a jail on the one hand, and what he feared almost as much, Mr. Stock's anger on the other, spurred him on; and he valued himself not a little at having got the better of this temptation. He felt quite happy when he found he had reached the door of his landlord without having yielded to one idle inclination.

He knocked at the door. The maid who opened it said her master was not at home. 'I am sorry for it,' said he, strutting about; and with a boasting air he took out his money. 'I want to pay him my rent: he needed not to have been afraid of *me*.' The servant, who knew her master was very much afraid of him, desired him to walk in, for her master would be at home in half an hour. 'I will call again,' said he; 'but no, let him call on me, and the sooner the better: I shall be at the Blue Posts.' While he had been talking he took care to open his black leather case, and to display the bank bills to the servant, and then, in a swaggering way, he put up his money and marched off to the Blue Posts.

He was by this time quite proud of his own resolution, and having tendered the money, and being clear in his own mind that it was the landlord's own fault and not his that it was not paid, he went to refresh himself at the Blue Posts. In a barn belonging to this public house a set of strollers were just going to perform some of that sing-song ribaldry by which our villages are corrupted, the laws broken, and that money drawn from the poor for pleasure, which is wanted by their families for bread. The name of the last new song which made part of the entertainment, made him think himself in high luck, that he should have just that half hour to spare. He went into the barn, but was too much delighted with the actor, who sung his favourite song, to remain a quiet hearer. He leaped out of the pit, and got behind the two ragged blankets which served for a curtain. He sung so much better than the actors themselves, that they praised and admired him to a degree which awakened all his vanity. He was so intoxicated with their flattery, that he could do no less than invite them all to supper, an invitation which they were too hungry not to accept.

He did not, however, quite forget his appointment with his landlord; but the half hour was long since past by. 'And so,' says he, 'as I know he is a mean curmudgeon, who goes to bed by daylight to save candles, it will be too late to speak with him to-night; besides, let him call upon me; it is his business and not mine. I left word where I was to be found; the money is ready, and if I don't pay him to-night, I can do it before breakfast.'

By the time these firm resolutions were made, supper was ready. There never was a more jolly evening. Ale and punch were as plenty as water. The actors saw what a vain fellow was feasting them; and as they wanted victuals, and he wanted flattery, the business was soon settled. They ate, and Brown sung. They pretended to be in raptures. Singing promoted drinking, and every fresh glass produced a song or a story still more merry than the former. Before morning, the players, who were engaged to act in another barn a dozen miles off, stole away quietly. Brown having dropt asleep they left him to finish his nap by himself. As to him his dreams were gay and pleasant, and the house being quite still, he slept comfortably till morning.

As soon as he had breakfasted, the business of the night before popped into his head. He set off once more to his landlord's in high spirits, gaily singing by the way, scraps of all the tunes he had picked up the night before from his new friends. The landlord opened the door himself, and reproached him with no small surliness for not having kept his word with him the evening before, adding, that he supposed he was come now with some more of his shallow excuses. Brown put on all that haughtiness which is common to people who being generally apt to be in the wrong, happen to catch themselves doing a right action; he looked big, as some sort of people do when they have money to pay. 'You need not have been so anxious about your money,' said he, 'I was not going to break or run away.' The landlord well knew this was the common language of those who are ready to do both. Brown haughtily added, 'You shall see I am a man of my word; give me a receipt.' The landlord had it ready and gave it him.

Brown put his hand in his pocket for his black leathern case in which the bills were; he felt, he searched, he examined, first one pocket, then the other; then both waistcoat pockets, but no leather case could he find. He looked terrified. It was indeed the face of real terror, but the landlord conceived it to be that of guilt, and abused him heartily for putting his old tricks upon him; he swore he would not be imposed upon any longer; the money or a jail—there lay his choice.

Brown protested for once with great truth, that he had no intention to deceive; declared that he had actually brought the money, and knew not what was become of it; but the thing was far too unlikely to gain credit. Brown now called to mind that he had fallen asleep on the settle in the room where they had supped. This raised his spirits; for he had no doubt but the case had fallen out of his pocket; he said he would step to the public house and search for it, and would be back directly. Not one word of this did the landlord believe, so inconvenient is it to have a bad character. He swore Brown should not stir out of his house without a constable, and made him wait while he sent for one. Brown, guarded by the constable, went back to the Blue Posts, the landlord charging the officer not to lose sight of the culprit. The caution was needless; Brown had not the least design of running away, so firmly persuaded was he that he should find his leather case.

But who can paint his dismay, when no tale or tidings of the leather case could be had! The master, the mistress, the boy, the maid of the public house all protested they were innocent. His suspicions soon fell on the strollers

with whom he had passed the night; and he now found out for the first time, that a merry evening did not always produce a happy morning. He obtained a warrant, and proper officers were sent in pursuit of the strollers. No one, however, believed he had really lost any thing; and as he had not a shilling left to defray the expensive treat he had given, the master of the inn agreed with the other landlord in thinking this story was a trick to defraud them both, and Brown remained in close custody. At length the officers returned, who said they had been obliged to let the strollers go, as they could not fix the charge on any one, and they had offered to swear before a justice that they had seen nothing of the leasher case. It was at length agreed that as he had passed the evening in a crowded barn, he had probably been robbed there, if at all; and among so many, who could pretend to guess at the thief?

Brown raved like a madman; he cried, tore his hair, and said he was ruined forever. The abusive language of his old landlord, and his new creditor at the Blue Posts, did not lighten his sorrow. His landlord would be put off no longer. Brown declared he could neither find bail nor raise another shilling; and as soon as the forms of law were made out, he was sent to the county jail.

Here it might have been expected that hard living and much leisure would have brought him to reflect a little on his past follies. But his heart was not truly touched. The chief thing which grieved him at first was, his having abused the kindness of Stock, for to him he should appear guilty of a real fraud, where he had indeed been only vain, idle, and imprudent. And it is worth while here to remark, that vanity, idleness, and imprudence, often bring a man to utter ruin both of soul and body, though silly people do not put them in the catalogue of heavy sins, and those who indulge in them are often reckoned honest, merry fellows, with *the best hearts in the world.*

I wish I had room to tell my readers what befel Jack in his present doleful habitation, and what became of him afterwards. I promise them, however, that they shall certainly know the first of next month, when I hope they will not forget to inquire for the fourth part of the Shoemakers, or Jack Brown in prison

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PART IV.

Jack Brown in Prison.

Brown was no sooner lodged in his doleful habitation, and a little recovered from his first surprise, than he sat down and wrote his friend Stock the whole history of the transaction. Mr. Stock, who had long known the exceeding lightness and dissipation of his mind, did not so utterly disbelieve the story as all the other creditors did. To speak the truth, Stock was the only one among them who had good sense enough to know, that a man may be completely ruined, both in what relates to his property and his soul, without committing Old Bailey crimes. He well knew that idleness, vanity, and the love of *pleasure*, as it is falsely called, will bring a man to a morsel of bread, as surely as those things which are reckoned much greater sins; and that they undermine his principles as certainly, though not quite so fast.

Stock was too angry with what had happened to answer Brown's letter, or to seem to take the least notice of him. However, he kindly and secretly, undertook a journey to the hard-hearted old farmer, Brown's father, to intercede with him, and to see if he would do any thing for his son. Stock did not pretend to excuse Jack, or even to lessen his offences; for it was a rule of his never to disguise truth or to palliate wickedness. Sin was still sin in his eyes, though it were committed by his best friend; but though he would not soften the sin, he felt tenderly for the sinner. He pleaded with the old farmer on the ground, that his son's idleness and other vices would gather fresh strength in a jail. He told him, that the loose and worthless company which he would there keep, would harden him in vice, and if he was now wicked, he might there become irreclaimable.

But all his pleas were urged in vain. The farmer was not to be moved, indeed he argued with some justice, that he ought not to make his industrious children beggars to save one rogue from the gallows. Mr. Stock allowed the force of his reasoning, though he saw the father was less influenced by this principle of justice than by resentment on account of the old story of Smiler. People, indeed, should take care that what appears in their conduct to proceed from justice, does not really proceed from revenge. Wiser men than farmer Brown often deceive themselves, and fancy they act on better principles than they really do, for want of looking a little more closely into their own hearts, and putting down every action to its true motive. When we are praying against deceit we should not forget to take self-deceit into the account.

Mr. Stock at length wrote to poor Jack; not to offer him any help, that was quite out of the question, but to exhort him to repent of his evil ways; to lay before him the sins of his past life, and to advise him to convert the present punishment into a benefit, by humbling himself before God. He offered his interest to get his place of confinement exchanged for one of those improved prisons, where solitude and labour have been made the happy instruments of bringing many to a better way of thinking, and ended by saying, that if he ever gave any solid signs of real amendment he would still be his friend, in spite of all that was past.

If Mr. Stock had sent him a good sum of money to procure his liberty, or even to make merry with his wretched companions, Jack would have thought him a friend indeed. But to send him nothing but dry advice, and a few words of empty comfort, was, he thought, but a cheap shabby way of showing his kindness. Unluckily the letter came just as he was going to sit down to one of those direful merry-makings which are often carried on with brutal riot within the doleful walls of a jail on the entrance of a new prisoner, who is often expected to give a feast to the rest.

When his companions were heated with gin; 'Now,' said Jack, 'I'll treat you with a sermon, and a very pretty preachment it is.' So saying, he took out Mr. Stock's kind and pious letter, and was delighted at the bursts of laughter it produced. 'What a canting dog!' said one. 'Repentance, indeed!' cried Tom Crew; 'No, no, Jack, tell this hypocritical rogue that if we have lost our liberty, it is only for having been jolly, hearty fellows, and we have more spirit than to repent of that I hope: all the harm we have done is living a little too fast, like honest bucks as we are.—'Ay, ay,' said jolly George, 'had we been such sneaking miserly fellows as Stock, we need not have come hither. But if the ill nature of the laws has been so cruel as to clap up such fine hearty blades, we are no *felons* however. We are afraid of no Jack Ketch; and I see no cause to repent of any sin that's not hanging matter. As to those who are thrust into the condemned hole indeed, and have but a few hours to live, they *must* see the parson, and hear a sermon, and such stuff. But I do not know what such stout young fellows as we are have to do with repentance. And so, Jack, let us have that rare new catch which you learnt of the strollers that merry night when you lost your pocket-book.'

This thoughtless youth soon gave a fresh proof of the power of evil company, and of the quick progress of the heart of a sinner from bad to worse. Brown, who always wanted principle, soon grew to want feeling also. He joined in the laugh which was raised against Stock, and told many *good stories*, as they were called, in derision of the piety, sobriety, and self-denial of his old friend. He lost every day somewhat of those small remains of shame and decency which he had brought with him to the prison. He even grew reconciled to this wretched way of life, and the want of money seemed to him the heaviest evil in the life of a jail.

Mr. Stock finding from the jailer that his letter had been treated with ridicule, would not write to him any more. He did not come to see him nor send him any assistance, thinking it right to let him suffer that want which his vices had brought upon him. But as he still hoped that the time would come when he might be brought to a sense of his evil courses, he continued to have an eye upon him by means of the jailer, who was an honest, kind-hearted man.

Brown spent one part of his time in thoughtless riot, and the other in gloomy sadness. Company kept up his spirits; with his new friends he contrived to drown thought; but when he was alone he began to find that a *merry fellow*, when deprived of his companions and his liquor, is often a most forlorn wretch. Then it is that even a merry fellow says, *Of laughter, what is it? and of mirth, it is madness.*

As he contrived, however, to be as little alone as possible his gaiety was commonly uppermost till that loathsome distemper, called the jail fever, broke out in the prison. Tom Crew, the ringleader in all their evil practices, was first seized with it. Jack staid a little while with his comrade to assist and divert him, but of assistance he could give little, and the very thought of diversion was now turned into horror. He soon caught the distemper, and that in so dreadful a degree, that his life was in great danger. Of those who remained in health not a soul came near him, though he shared his last farthing with them. He had just sense enough left to feel this cruelty. Poor fellow! he did not know before, that the friendship of the worldly is at an end when there is no more drink or diversion to be had. He lay in the most deplorable condition; his body tormented with a dreadful disease, and his soul terrified and amazed at the approach of death: that death which he thought at so great a distance, and of which his comrades had so often assured him that a young fellow of five-and-twenty was in no danger. Poor Jack! I cannot help feeling for him. Without a shilling! without a friend! without one comfort respecting this world, and, what is far more terrible, without one hope respecting the next.

Let not the young reader fancy that Brown's misery arose entirely from his altered circumstances. It was not merely his being in want, and sick, and in prison, which made his condition so desperate. Many an honest man unjustly accused, many a persecuted saint, many a holy martyr has enjoyed sometimes more peace and content in a prison than wicked men have ever tasted in the height of their prosperity. But to any such comforts, to any comfort at all, poor Jack was an utter stranger.

A christian friend generally comes forward at the very time when worldly friends forsake the wretched. The other prisoners would not come near Brown, though he had often entertained, and had never offended them; even his own father was not moved with his sad condition. When Mr. Stock informed him of it, he answered, ''Tis no more than he deserves. As he brews so he must bake. He has made his own bed, and let him lie in it.' The hard old man had ever at his tongue's end some proverb of hardness, or frugality, which he contrived to turn in such a way as to excuse himself.

We shall now see how Mr. Stock behaved. He had his favourite sayings too; but they were chiefly on the side of kindness, mercy, or some other virtue. 'I must not,' said he, 'pretend to call myself a Christian, if I do not requite evil with good.' When he received the jailer's letter with the account of Brown's sad condition, Will Simpson and Tommy Williams began to compliment him on his own wisdom and prudence, by which he had escaped Brown's misfortunes. He only gravely said, 'Blessed be God that I am not in the same misery. It is *He* who has made us to differ. But for *his* grace I might have been in no better condition.—Now Brown is brought low by the hand of God, it is my time to go to him.' 'What, you!' said Will, 'whom he cheated of your money?'—'This is not a time to remember injuries,' said Mr. Stock. 'How can I ask forgiveness for my own sins, if I withhold forgiveness from him?' So saying, he ordered his horse, and set off to see poor Brown; thus proving that his was a religion not of words but of deeds.

Stock's heart nearly failed him as he passed

through the prison. The groans of the sick and dying, and, what to such a heart as his was still more moving, the brutal merriment of the healthy in such a place, pierced his very soul. Many a silent prayer did he put up as he passed along, that God would yet be pleased to touch their hearts, and that now (during this infectious sickness) might be the accepted time. The jailer observed him drop a tear, and asked the cause. 'I cannot forget, said he, 'that the most dissolute of these men is still my fellow creature. The same God made them; the same Saviour died for them; how then can I hate the worst of them? With my advantages they might have been much better than I am; without the blessing of God on my good minister's instructions, I might have been worse than the worst of these. I have no cause for pride, much for thankfulness; '*Let us not be high-minded, but fear.*'

It would have moved a heart of stone to have seen poor miserable Jack Brown lying on his wretched bed, his face so changed by pain, poverty, dirt, and sorrow, that he could hardly be known for that merry soul of a jack-boot, as he used to be proud to hear himself called. His groans were so piteous that it made Mr. Stock's heart ache. He kindly took him by the hand, though he knew the distemper was catching.—'How dost do, Jack?' said he, 'dost know me?' Brown shook his head and said, faintly, 'Know you? ay, that I do. I am sure I have but one friend in the world who would come to see me in this woeful condition. O James! what have I brought myself to? What will become of my poor soul? I dare not look back, for that is all sin; nor forward, for that is all misery and woe.'

Mr. Stock spake kindly to him, but did not attempt to cheer him with false comfort, as is too often done. 'I am asham'd to see you in this dirty place,' says Brown. 'As to the place, Jack,' replied the other, 'if it has helped to bring you to a sense of your past offences, it will be no bad place for you. I am heartily sorry for your distress and your sickness; but if it should please God by them to open your eyes, and to show you that sin is a greater evil than the prison to which it has brought you, all may yet be well. I had rather see you in this humble penitent state, lying on this dirty bed, in this dismal prison, than roaring and rioting at the Grayhound, the king of the company, with handsome clothes on your back, and plenty of money in your pocket.'

Brown wept bitterly, and squeezed his hand, but was too weak to say much. Mr. Stock then desired the jailor to let him have such things as were needful, and he would pay for them. He would not leave the poor fellow till he had given him, with his own hands, some broth which the jailor had got ready for him, and some medicines which the doctor had sent. All this kindness cut Brown to the heart. He was just able to sob out, 'My unnatural father leaves me to perish, and my injured friend is more than a father to me.' Stock told him that one proof he must give of his repentance, was, that he must forgive his father, whose provocation had been very great. He then said he would leave him for the present to take some rest, and desired him to lift up his heart to God for mercy. 'Dear James,' replied Brown, 'do you pray for me God perhaps may hear you, but he will never hear the prayer of such a sinner as I have been.' 'Take care how you think so,' said Stock., 'To believe that God cannot forgive you would be still a greater sin than any you have yet committed against him.' He then explained to him in a few words, as well as he was able, the nature of repentance and forgiveness through a Saviour, and warned him earnestly against unbelief and hardness of heart.

Poor Jack grew much refreshed in body with the comfortable things he had taken; and a little cheered with Stock's kindness in coming so far to see and to forgive such a forlorn outcast, sick of an infectious distemper, and locked within the walls of a prison.

Surely, said he to himself, there must be some mighty power in a religion which can lead men to do such things! things so much against the grain as to forgive such an injury, and to risk catching such a distemper; but he was so weak he could not express this in words. He tried to pray but he could not; at length, overpowered with weariness, he fell asleep.

When Mr. Stock came back, he was surprised to find him so much better in body; but his agonies of mind were dreadful, and he had now got strength to express part of the horrors which he felt. 'James,' said he (looking wildly) 'it is all over with me. I am a lost creature. Even your prayers cannot save me.'—'Dear Jack,' replied Mr. Stock, 'I am no minister; it does not become me to talk much to thee: but I know I may venture to say whatever is in the Bible. As ignorant as I am I shall be safe enough while I stick to that.' 'Ay,' said the sick man, 'you used to be ready enough to read to me, and I would not listen, or if I did it was only to make fun of what I heard, and now you will not so much as read a bit of a chapter to me.'

This was the very point to which Stock longed to bring him. So he took a little Bible out of his pocket, which he always carried with him on a journey, and read slowly, verse by verse, the fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. When he came to the sixth and seventh verses, poor Jack cried so much that Stock was forced to stop. The words were, *Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord.* Here Brown stopped him, saying, 'Oh it is too late, too late for me.'—'Let me finish the verse,' said Stock, 'and you will see your error; you will see that it is never too late.' So he read on—*Let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.* Here Brown started up, snatched the book out of his hand, and cried out, 'Is that really there? No, no; that's of your own putting in, in order to comfort me; let me look at the words myself.'—'No, indeed,' said Stock, 'I would not for the world give you unfounded comfort, or put off any notion of my own for a Scripture doctrine.'—'But is it possible,' cried the sick man, 'that God may really pardon me? Do'st think he can! Do'st think he will?' 'I dare not give thee false hopes, or indeed any hopes of my own. But these are God's own words, and the only difficulty is to know when we are really brought

into such a state as that the words may be applied to us. For a text may be full of comfort, and yet may not belong to us.'

Mr. Stock was afraid of saying more. He would not venture out of his depth; nor indeed was poor Brown able to bear more discourse just now. So he made him a present of the Bible, folding down such places as he thought might be best suited to his state, and took his leave, being obliged to return home that night. He left a little money with the jailor, to add a few comforts to the allowance of the prison, and promised to return in a short time.

When he got home, he described the sufferings and misery of Brown in a very moving manner; but Tommy Williams, instead of being properly affected by it, only said, 'Indeed, master, I am not very sorry; he is rightly served.'—'How, Tommy,' said Mr. Stock (rather sternly) 'not sorry to see a fellow creature brought to the lowest state of misery; one too whom you have known so prosperous?' 'No, master, I can't say I am; for Mr. Brown used to make fun of you, and laugh at you for being so godly, and reading your Bible.'

'Let me say a few words to you Tommy,' said Mr. Stock. 'In the first place you should never watch for the time of a man's being brought low by trouble to tell of his faults. Next, you should never rejoice at his trouble, but pity him, and pray for him. Lastly, as to his ridiculing me for my religion, if I cannot stand an idle jest, I am not worthy the name of a Christian.—*He that is ashamed of me and my word*—do'st remember what follows Tommy?' —'Yes, master, it was last Sunday's text—*of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he shall judge the world.*'

Mr. Stock soon went back to the prison. But he did not go alone. He took with him Mr. Thomas, the worthy minister who had been the guide and instructor of his youth, who was so kind as to go at his request and visit this forlorn prisoner. When they got to Brown's door, they found him sitting up in his bed with the Bible in his hand. This was a joyful sight to Mr. Stock, who secretly thanked God for it. Brown was reading aloud; they listened; it was the fifteenth of Saint Luke. The circumstances of this beautiful parable of the prodigal son were so much like his own, that the story pierced him to the soul; and he stopped every minute to compare his own case with that of the prodigal. He was just got to the eighteenth verse, *I will arise and go to my father*—at that moment he spied his two friends; joy darted into his eyes. 'O dear Jem,' said he, 'it is *not* too late, I will arise, and go to my Father, my heavenly Father, and you, sir, will show me the way, won't you?' said he to Mr. Thomas, whom he recollected. 'I am very glad to see you in so hopeful a disposition,' said the good minister. 'O, sir,' said Brown, 'what a place is this to receive you in? O, see to what I have brought myself!'

'Your condition, as to this world, is indeed very low,' replied the good divine. 'But what are mines, dungeons, or gallies, to that eternal hopeless prison to which your unrepented sins must soon have consigned you. Even in the gloomy prison, on this bed of straw, worn down by pain, poverty, and want, forsaken by your worldly friends, an object of scorn to those with whom you used to carouse and riot; yet here, I say, brought thus low, if you have at last found out your own vileness, and your utterly undone state by sin, you may still be more an object of favour in the sight of God, than when you thought yourself prosperous and happy; when the world smiled upon you, and you passed your days and nights in envied gaiety and unchristian riot. If you will but improve the present awful visitation; if you do but heartily renounce and abhor your present evil courses; if you even now turn to the Lord your Saviour with lively faith, deep repentance, and unfeigned obedience, I shall still have more hope of you than of many who are going on quite happy, because quite insensible. The heavy laden sinner, who has discovered the iniquity of his own heart, and his utter inability to help himself, may be restored to God's favour, and become happy, though in a dungeon. And be assured, that he who from deep and humble contrition dares not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, when with a hearty faith he sighs out, *Lord, be merciful to me a sinner*, shall in no wise be cast out. These are the words of him who cannot lie.'

It is impossible to describe the self-abasement, the grief, the joy, the shame, the hope, and the fear which filled the mind of this poor man. A dawn of comfort at length shone on his benighted mind. His humility and fear of falling back into his former sins, if he should ever recover, Mr. Thomas thought were strong symptoms of a sound repentance. He improved and cherished every good disposition he saw arising in his heart, and particularly warned him against self-deceit, self-confidence, and hypocrisy

After Brown had deeply expressed his sorrow for his offences, Mr. Thomas thus addressed him. 'There are two ways of being sorry for sin. Are you, Mr. Brown, afraid of the guilt of sin because of the punishment annexed to it, or are you afraid of sin itself? Do you wish to be delivered from the power of sin? Do you hate sin because you know it is offensive to a pure and holy God? Or are you only ashamed of it because it has brought you to a prison and exposed you to the contempt of the world? It is not said that the wages of this or that particular sin is death, but of sin in general; there is no exception made because it is a more creditable or a favourite sin, or because it is a little one. There are, I repeat, two ways of being sorry for sin. Cain was sorry—*My punishment is greater than I can bear*, said he; but here you see the punishment seemed to be the cause of concern, not the sin. David seems to have had a good notion of godly sorrow, when he says, *Wash me from mine iniquity, cleanse me from my sin.* And when Job *repented in dust and ashes*, it is not said he excused himself, but he *abhorred himself.* And the prophet Isaiah called himself undone, because he was *a man of unclean lips;* for, said he "I have seen the King, the Lord of hosts;" that is, he could not take the proper measure of his own iniquity till he had considered the perfect holiness of God.'

One day, when Mr. Thomas and Mr. Stock

came to see him, they found him more than commonly affected. His face was more ghastly pale than usual, and his eyes were red with crying. 'Oh, sir,' said he, 'what a sight have I just seen! jolly George, as we used to call him, the ringleader of all our mirth, who was at the bottom of all the fun and tricks, and wickedness that are carried on within these walls, jolly George is just dead of the jail distemper! He taken, and I left! I *would* be carried into his room to speak to him, to beg him to take warning by me, and that I might take warning by him. But what did I see! what did I hear! not one sign of repentance; not one dawn of hope. Agony of body, blasphemies on his tongue, despair in his soul; while I am spared and comforted with hopes of mercy and acceptance. Oh, if all my old friends at the Grayhound could but then have seen jolly George! A hundred sermons about death, sir, don't speak so home, and cut so deep, as the sight of one dying sinner.'

Brown grew gradually better in his health, that is, the fever mended, but the distemper settled in his limbs, so that he seemed likely to be a poor, weakly cripple the rest of his life. But as he spent much of his time in prayer, and in reading such parts of the Bible as Mr. Thomas directed, he improved every day in knowledge and piety, and of course grew more resigned to pain and infirmity.

Some months after this, his hard-hearted father, who had never been prevailed upon to see him, or offer him the least relief, was taken off suddenly by a fit of apoplexy; and, after all his threatenings, he died without a will. He was one of those silly, superstitious men, who fancy they shall die the sooner for having made one; and who love the world and the things that are in the world so dearly, that they dread to set about any business which may put them in mind that they are not always to live in it. As, by this neglect, his father had not fulfilled his threat of cutting him off with a shilling, Jack, of course, went shares with his brothers in what their father left. What fell to him proved to be just enough to discharge him from prison, and to pay all his debts, but he had nothing left. His joy at being thus enabled to make restitution was so great that he thought little of his own wants. He did not desire to conceal the most trifling debt, nor to keep a shilling for himself.

Mr. Stock undertook to settle all his affairs. There did not remain money enough after every creditor was satisfied, even to pay for his removal home. Mr. Stock kindly sent his own cart for him with a bed in it, made as comfortable as possible, for he was too weak and lame to be removed any other way, and Mrs. Stock gave the driver particular charge to be tender and careful of him, and not to drive hard, nor to leave the cart a moment.

Mr. Stock would fain have taken him into his own house, at least for a time, so convinced was he of the sincere reformation both of heart and life; but Brown would not be prevailed on to be further burthensome to this generous friend. He insisted on being carried to the parish workhouse, which he said was a far better place than he deserved. In this house Mr. Stock furnished a small room for him, and sent him every day a morsel of meat from his own dinner. Tommy Williams begged that he might always be allowed to carry it, as some atonement for his having for a moment so far forgotten his duty, as rather to rejoice than sympathize in Brown's misfortunes. He never thought of this fault without sorrow, and often thanked his master for the wholesome lesson he then gave him, and he was the better for it all his life.

Mrs. Stock often carried poor Brown a dish of tea or a basin of good broth herself. He was quite a cripple, and never able to walk out as long as he lived. Mr. Stock, Will Simpson and Tommy Williams laid their heads together, and contrived a sort of barrow on which he was often carried to church by some of his poor neighbours, of which Tommy was always one; and he requited their kindness, by reading a good book to them whenever they would call in; and he spent his time in teaching their children to sing psalms or say the catechism.

It was no small joy to him thus to be enabled to go to church. Whenever he was carried by the Grayhound, he was much moved, and used to put up a prayer full of repentance for the past, and praise for the present.

PART V.

A dialogue between James Stock and Will Simpson, the shoemakers, as they sat at work, on the duty of carrying religion into our common business.

James Stock, and his journeyman Will Simpson, as I informed my readers in the second part, had resolved to work together one hour every evening, in order to pay for Tommy Williams's schooling. This circumstance brought them to be a good deal together when the rest of the men were gone home. Now it happened that Mr. Stock had a pleasant way of endeavouring to turn all common events to some use; and he thought it right on the present occasion to make the only return in his power to Will Simpson for his great kindness. For, said he, if Will gives up so much of his time to help to provide for this poor boy, it is the least I can do to try to turn part of that time to the purpose of promoting Will's spiritual good. Now as the bent of Stock's own mind was religious, it was easy to him to lead their talk to something profitable. He always took especial care, however, that the subject should be introduced properly, cheerfully, and without constraint. As he well knew that great good may be sometimes done by a prudent attention in seizing proper opportunities, so he knew that the cause of piety had been sometimes hurt by forcing serious subjects where there was clearly no disposition to receive them. I say he had found out that two things were necessary to the promoting of religion among his friends; a warm zeal to be always on the watch for occasions, and a cool judgment to distinguish which was the right time and place to make use of them. To know *how* to do good is a great matter, but to know *when* to do it is no small one.

Simpson was an honest good-natured young man; he was now become sober, and rather religiously disposed. But he was ignorant, he did not know much of the grounds of religion, or of the corruption of his own nature. He was regular at church, but was first drawn thither rather by his skill in psalm-singing than by any great devotion. He had left off going to the Grayhound, and often read the Bible, or some other good book on the Sunday evening. This he thought was quite enough; he thought the Bible was the prettiest history book in the world, and that religion was a very good thing for Sundays. But he did not much understand what business people had with it on working days. He had left off drinking because it had brought Williams to the grave, and his wife to dirt and rags; but not because he himself had seen the evil of sin. He now considered swearing and Sabbath-breaking as scandalous and indecent, but he had not found out that both were to be left off because they are highly offensive to God, and grieve his Holy Spirit. As Simpson was less self-conceited than most ignorant people are, Stock had always a good hope that when he should come to be better acquainted with the word of God, and with the evil of his own heart, he would become one day a good Christian. The great hindrance to this was, that he fancied himself so already.

One evening Simpson had been calling to Stock's mind how disorderly the house and shop, where they were now sitting quietly at work, had formerly been and he went on thus:

Will. How comfortably we live now, master, to what we used to do in Williams's time! I used then never to be happy but when we were keeping it up all night, but now I am as merry as the day is long. I find I am twice as happy since I am grown good and sober.

Stock. I am glad you are happy, Will, and I rejoice that you are sober; but I would not have you take too much pride in your own *goodness*, for fear it should become a sin, almost as great as some of those you have left off. Besides, I would not have you make quite so sure that you *are* good.

Will. Not good, master! why don't you find me regular and orderly at work?

Stock. Very much so; and accordingly I have a great respect for you.

Will. I pay every one his own, seldom miss church, have not been drunk since Williams died, have handsome clothes for Sundays, and save a trifle every week.

Stock. Very true, and very laudable it is; and to all this you may add that you very generously work an hour, for poor Tommy's education, every evening without fee or reward.

Will. Well, master, what can a man do more? If all this is not being good, I don't know what is.

Stock. All these things are very right as far as they go, and you could not well be a Christian without doing them. But I shall make you stare, perhaps, when I tell you, you may do all these things, and many more, and yet be no Christian.

Will. No Christian! surely, master, I do hope that after all I have done, you will not be so unkind as to say I am no Christian.

Stock. God forbid that I should say so, Will. I hope better things of you. But come now, what do you think it is to be a Christian?

Will. What! why to be christened when one is a child; to learn the catechism when one can read; to be confirmed when one is a youth; and to go to church when one is a man.

Stock. These are all very proper things, and quite necessary. They make part of a Christian's life. But for all that, a man may be exact in them all, and yet not be a Christian.

Will. Not be a christian! ha! ha! ha! you are very comical, master.

Stock. No, indeed, I am very serious, Will. At this rate it would be a very easy thing to be a Christian, and every man who went through certain forms would be a good man; and one man who observed those forms would be as good as another. Whereas, if we come to examine ourselves by the word of God, I am afraid there are but few comparatively whom our Saviour would allow to be real Christians. What is your notion of a Christian's practice?

Will. Why, he must not rob, nor murder, nor get drunk. He must avoid scandalous things, and do as other decent orderly people do.

Stock. It is easy enough to be what the world calls a Christian, but not to be what the Bible calls so.

Will. Why, master, we working men are not expected to be saints, and martyrs, and apostles, and ministers.

Stock. We are not. And yet, Will, there are not two sorts of Christianity; we are called to practise the same religion which they practised, and something of the same spirit is expected in us which we reverence in them. It was not saints and martyrs only to whom our Saviour said that they must *crucify the world with its affections and lusts*. We are called to *be holy* in our measure and degree, *as he who hath called us is holy*. It was not only saints and martyrs who were told that they must be *like minded with Christ*. That *they must do all to the glory of God*. That *they must renounce the spirit of the world, and deny themselves*. It was not to apostles only that Christ said, *They must have their conversation in heaven*. It was not to a few holy men, set apart for the altar, that he said, *They must set their affections on things above*. That *they must not be conformed to the world*. No, it was to fishermen, to publicans, to farmers, to day-labourers, to poor tradesmen, that he spoke when he told them, they must *love not the world, nor the things of the world.—That they must renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, grow in grace, lay up for themselves treasures in Heaven.*

Will. All this might be very proper for *them* to be taught, because they had not been bred up Christians, but Heathens or Jews: and Christ, wanted to make them his followers, that is, Christians. But thank God we do not want to be taught all this, for we *are* Christians, born in a Christian country, of Christian parents.

Stock. I suppose then you fancy that Christianity comes to people in a Christian country by nature?

Will. I think it comes by a good education or a good example. When a fellow who has

got any sense, sees a man cut off in his prime by drinking, like Williams, I think he will begin to leave it off. When he sees another man respected, like you, master, for honesty and sobriety, and going to church, why he will grow honest, and sober, and go to church: that is, he will see it his advantage to be a Christian.

Stock. Will, what you say is the truth, but 'tis not the whole truth. You are right as far as you go, but you do not go far enough. The worldly advantages of piety, are, as you suppose, in general great. Credit, prosperity, and health, almost naturally attend on a religious life, both because a religious life supposes a sober and industrious life, and because a man who lives in a course of duty puts himself in the way of God's blessing. But a true Christian has a still higher aim in view, and will follow religion even under circumstances, when it may hurt his credit and ruin his prosperity, if it should ever happen to be the will of God that he should be brought into such a trying state.

Will. Well, master, to speak the truth, if I go to church on Sundays, and follow my work in the week, I must say I think that is being good.

Stock. I agree with you, that he who does both, gives the best outward signs that he is good, as you call it. But our going to church, and even reading the Bible, are no proofs that we are as good as we need be, but rather that we do both these in order to make us better than we are. We do both on Sundays, as means, by God's blessing, to make us better all the week. We are to bring the fruits of that chapter or of that sermon into our daily life, and try to get our inmost heart and secret thoughts, as well as our daily conduct, amended by them.

Will. Why sure, master, you won't be so unreasonable as to want a body to be religious always? I can't do that neither. I'm not such a hypocrite as to pretend to it.

Stock. Yes, you can be so in every action of your life.

Will. What, master, always to be thinking about religion?

Stock. No, far from it, Will; much less to be always talking about it. But you must be always under its power and spirit.

Will. But surely 'tis pretty well if I do this when I go to church; or while I am saying my prayers. Even you, master, as strict as you are, would not have me always on my knees, nor always at church, I suppose: for then how would your work be carried on, and how would our town be supplied with shoes?

Stock. Very true, Will. 'Twould be no proof of our religion to let our customers go barefoot; but 'twould be a proof of our laziness, and we should starve, as we ought to do. The business of the world must not only be carried on, but carried on with spirit and activity. We have the same authority for not being *slothful in business*, as we have for being *fervent in spirit*. Religion has put godliness and laziness, as wide asunder as any two things in the world; and what God has separated let no man pretend to join. Indeed, the spirit of religion can have no fellowship with sloth, indolence, and self-indulgence. But still, a Christian does not carry on his common trade quite like another man neither; for something of the spirit which he labours to attain at church, he carries with him into his worldly concerns. While there are some who set up for Sunday Christians, who have no notion that they are bound to be week-day Christians too.

Will. Why, master, I do think, if God Almighty is contented with one day in seven, he won't thank you for throwing him the other six into the bargain. I thought he gave us them for our own use; and I am sure nobody works harder all the week than you do.

Stock. God, it is true, sets apart one day in seven for actual rest from labour, and for more immediate devotion to his service.—But show me that text wherein he says, thou shalt love the Lord thy God on *Sundays*—Thou shalt keep my commandments on the *Sabbath day*—To be carnally minded on *Sundays, is death*—Cease to do evil, and learn to do well *one day in seven*—Grow in grace on the *Lord's day*—Is there any such text?

Will. No, to be sure there is not; for that would be encouraging sin on all the other days.

Stock. Yes, just as you do when you make religion a thing for the church, and not for the world. There is no one lawful calling, in pursuing which we may not serve God acceptably. You and I may serve him while we are stitching this pair of boots. Farmer Furrow, while he is ploughing yonder field. Betsy West, over the way, whilst she is nursing her sick mother. Neighbour Incle, in measuring out his tapes and ribands. I say, all these may serve God just as acceptably in those employments as at church, I had almost said more so.

Will. Ay, indeed; how can that be?—Now you're too much on t'other side.

Stock. Because a man's trials in trade being often greater, they give him fresh means of glorifying God, and proving the sincerity of religion. A man who mixes in business, is naturally brought into continual temptations and difficulties. These will lead him, if he be a good man, to look more to God, than he perhaps would otherwise do—He sees temptations on the right hand and on the left; he knows that there are snares all around him; this makes him watchful: he feels that the enemy within is too ready to betray him; this makes him humble himself; while a sense of his own difficulties makes him tender to the failings of others.

Will. Then you would make one believe, after all, that trade and business must be sinful in itself, since it brings a man into all these snares and scrapes.

Stock. No, no, Will; trade and business don't create evil passions—they were in the heart before—only now and then they seem to lie snug a little—our concerns with the world bring them out into action a little more, and thus show both others and ourselves what we really are. But then, as the world offers more trials on the one hand, so on the other it holds out more duties. If we are called to battle oftener, we have more opportunities of victory. Every temptation resisted, is an enemy subdued; and *he that ruleth his own spirit, is better than he that taketh a city.*

Will. I don't quite understand you, master

Stock. I will try to explain myself.—There is no passion more called out by the transactions of trade than covetousness.—Now, 'tis impossible to withstand such a master sin as that, without carrying a good deal of the spirit of religion into one's trade.

Will. Well, I own I don't yet see how I am to be religious when I'm hard at work, or busy settling an account. I can't do two things at once; 'tis as if I were to pretend to make a shoe and cut out a boot at the same moment.

Stock. I tell you both must subsist together. Nay, the one must be the motive to the other. God commands us to be industrious, and if we love him, the desire of pleasing him should be the main spring of our industry.

Will. I don't see how I can always be thinking about pleasing God.

Stock. Suppose, now, a man had a wife and children whom he loved, and wished to serve; would he not be often thinking about them while he was at work? and though he would not be *always* thinking nor always talking about them, yet would not the very love he bore them be a constant spur to his industry? He would always be pursuing the same course from the same motive, though his words and even his thoughts must often be taken up in the common transactions of life.

Will. I say first one, then the other; now for labour, now for religion.

Stock. I will show that both must go together. I will suppose you were going to buy so many skins of our currier—that is quite a worldly transaction—you can't see what a spirit of religion has to do with buying a few calves' skins. Now, I tell you it has a great deal to do with it. Covetousness, a desire to make a good bargain, may rise up in your heart. Selfishness, a spirit of monopoly, a wish to get all, in order to distress others; these are evil desires, and must be subdued. Some opportunity of unfair gain offers, in which there may be much sin, and yet little scandal. Here a Christian will stop short; he will recollect, *That he who maketh haste to be rich shall hardly be innocent.* Perhaps the sin may be on the side of your dealer —*he* may want to overreach *you*—this is provoking—you are tempted to violent anger, perhaps to swear;—here is a fresh demand on you for a spirit of patience and moderation, as there was before for a spirit of justice and self-denial. If, by God's grace, you get the victory over these temptations, you are the better man for having been called out to them; always provided, that the temptations be not of your own seeking. If you give way, and sink under these temptations, don't go and say trade and business have made you covetous, passionate, and profane. No, no; depend upon it, you were so before; you would have had all these evil seeds lurking in your heart, if you had been loitering about at home and doing nothing, with the additional sin of idleness into the bargain. When you are busy, the devil often tempts you; when you are idle, you tempt the devil. If business and the world call these evil tempers into action, business and the world call that religion into action too which teaches us to resist them. And in this you see the week-day fruit of the Sunday's piety. 'Tis trade and business in the week which call us to put our Sunday readings, praying, and church-going into practice.

Will. Well, master, you have a comical way, somehow, of coming over one. I never should have thought there would have been any religion wanted in buying and selling a few calves' skins. But I begin to see there is a good deal in what you say. And, whenever I am doing a common action, I will try to remember that it must be done *after a godly sort.*

Stock. I hear the clock strike nine—let us leave off our work. I will only observe farther, that one good end of our bringing religion into our business is, to put us in mind not to undertake more business than we can carry on consistently with our religion. I shall never commend that man's diligence, though it is often commended by the world, who is not diligent about the salvation of his soul. We are as much forbidden to be overcharged with the *cares* of life, as with its *pleasures.* I only wish to prove to you, that a discreet Christian may be wise for both worlds; that he may employ his hands without entangling his soul, and labour for the meat that perisheth, without neglecting that which endureth unto eternal life; that he may be prudent for time whilst he is wise for eternity.

PART VI.

Dialogue the second. On the duty of carrying Religion into our amusements.

The next evening Will Simpson being got first to his work, Mr. Stock found him singing very cheerfully over his last. His master's entrance did not prevent his finishing his song, which concluded with these words:

> 'Since life is no more than a passage at best,
> Let us strew the way over with flowers.'

When Will had concluded his song, he turned to Mr. Stock, and said, 'I thank you, master, for first putting it into my head how wicked it is to sing profane and indecent songs. I never sing any now which have any wicked words in them.'

Stock. I am glad to hear it. So far you do well. But there are other things as bad as wicked words, nay worse perhaps, though they do not so much shock the ear of decency.

Will. What is that, master? What can be so bad as wicked words?

Stock. Wicked *thoughts,* Will. Which thoughts, when they are covered over with smooth words, and dressed out in pleasing rhymes, so as not to shock modest young people by the sound, do more harm to their principles, than those songs of which the words are so gross and disgusting, that no person of common decency can for a moment listen to them.

Will. Well, master, I am sure that was a very pretty song I was singing when you came in, and a song which very sober good people sing.

Stock. Do they? Then I will be bold to say

that singing such songs is no part of their goodness. I heard indeed but two lines of it, but they were so heathenish that I desire to hear no more.

Will. Now you are really too hard. What harm could there be in it? there was not one indecent word.

Stock. I own, indeed, that indecent words are particularly offensive. But, as I said before, though immodest expressions offend the ear more, they do not corrupt the heart, perhaps, much more than songs of which the words are decent, and the principle vicious. In the latter case, because there is nothing that shocks his ear, a man listens till the sentiment has so corrupted his heart, that his ears grow hardened too, and by long custom he loses all sense of the danger of profane diversions; and I must say I have often heard young women of character sing songs in company, which I should be ashamed to read by myself. But come, as we work, let us talk over this business a little; and first let us stick to this sober song of yours, that you boast so much about. (*repeats.*)

'Since life is no more than a passage at best,
Let us strew the way over with flowers.

Now what do you learn by this?

Will. Why, master, I don't pretend to learn much by it. But 'tis a pretty tune and pretty words.

Stock. But what do these pretty words mean?

Will. That we must make ourselves merry because life is short.

Stock. Will! Of what religion are you?

Will. You are always asking one such odd questions, master; why a Christian to be sure.

Stock. If I often ask you, or others this question, it is only because I like to know what grounds I am to go upon when I am talking with you or them. I conceive that there are in this country two sorts of people, Christians and no Christians. Now, if people profess to be of this first description, I expect one kind of notions, opinions, and behaviour from them; if they say they are of the latter, then I look for another set of notions and actions from them. I compel no man to think with me. I take every man at his word. I only expect him to think and believe according to the character he takes upon himself, and to act on the principles of that character which he professes to maintain.

Will. That's fair enough; I can't say but it is, to take a man at his own word, and on his own grounds.

Stock. Well then. Of whom does the Scripture speak when it says, *Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die?*

Will. Why of heathens to be sure, not of Christians.

Stock. And of whom when it says, *Let us crown ourselves with rosebuds before they are withered?*

Will. O that is Solomon's worldly fool.

Stock. You disapprove of both then.

Will. To be sure I do. I should not be a Christian if I did not.

Stock. And yet, though a Christian, you are admiring the very same thought in the song you were singing. How do you reconcile this?

Will. O there is no comparison between them. These several texts are designed to describe loose wicked heathens. Now I learn texts as part of my religion. But religion you know has nothing to do with a song. I sing a song for my pleasure.

Stock. In our last night's talk, Will, I endeavoured to prove to you that religion was to be brought into our *business.* I wish now to let you see that it is to be brought into our *pleasure* also. And that he who is really a Christian, must be a Christian in his very diversions.

Will. Now you are too strict again, master, as you last night declared, that in our business you would not have us always praying, so I hope that in our pleasure you would not have us always psalm-singing. I hope you would not have all one's singing to be about good things.

Stock. Not so, Will; but I would not have any part either of our business or our pleasure to be about evil things. It is one thing to be singing *about* religion, it is another thing to be singing *against* it. Saint Peter, I fancy, would not much have approved your favourite song. He, at least seemed to have another view of the matter, when he said, *The end of all things is at hand.* Now this text teaches much the same awful truth with the first line of your song. But let us see to what different purposes the apostle and the poet turn the very same thought. Your song says, because life is so short, let us make it merry. Let us divert ourselves so much on the road, that we may forget the end. Now what says the apostle, *Because the end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer.*

Will Why master, I like to be sober too, and have left off drinking. But still I never thought that we were obliged to carry texts out of the Bible to try the soundness of a song; and to enable us to judge if we might be both merry and wise in singing it.

Stock. Providence has not so stinted our enjoyments, Will, but he has left us many subjects of harmless merriment: but, for my own part, I am never certain that any one is quite harmless till I have tried it by this rule that you seem to think so strict. There is another favourite catch which I heard you and some of the workmen humming yesterday.

Will. I will prove to you that there is not a word of harm in *that;* pray listen now. (*sings.*)

'Which is the best day to drink—Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday?'

Stock. Now, Will, do you really find your unwillingness to drink is so great that you stand in need of all these incentives to provoke you to it? Do you not find temptation strong enough without exciting your inclinations, and whetting your appetites in this manner? Can any thing be more unchristian than to persuade youth by pleasant words, set to the most alluring music, that the pleasures of drinking are so great, that every day in the week, naming them all successively, by way of fixing and enlarging the idea, is equally fit, equally proper, and equally delightful, for what?—for the low and sensual purpose of getting drunk. Tell me, Will, are you so *very* averse to pleasure? Are

you naturally so cold and dead to all passion and temptation, that you really find it necessary to inflame your imagination, and disorder your senses, in order to excite a quicker relish for the pleasures of sin?

Will. All this is true enough, indeed; but I never saw it in this light before.

Stock. As I passed by the Grayhound last night, in my way to my evening's walk in the fields, I caught this one verse of a song which the club were singing:

'Bring the flask, the music bring,
Joy shall quickly find us;
Drink and dance, and laugh and sing,
And cast dull care behind us.'

When I got into the fields, I could not forbear comparing this song with the second lesson last Sunday evening at church; these were the words: *Take heed lest at any time your heart be overcharged with drunkenness, and so that day come upon you unawares, for as a snare shall it come upon all them that are on the face of the earth.*

Will. Why, to be sure, if the second lesson was right, the song must be wrong.

Stock. I ran over in my mind also a comparison between such songs as that which begins with

'Drink and drive care away.'

with those injunctions of holy writ, *Watch and pray therefore, that you enter not into temptation;* and again, *Watch and pray that you may escape all these things.* I say I compared this with the song I allude to,

Drink and drive care away,
Drink and be merry;
You'll ne'er go the faster
To the Stygian ferry.'

I compared this with that awful admonition of Scripture how to pass the time. *Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

Will. I am afraid then, master, you would not much approve of what I used to think a very pretty song, which begins with,

'A plague on those musty old lubbers,
Who teach us to fast and to think.'

Stock. Will, what would you think of any one who should sit down and write a book or a song to abuse the clergy?

Will. Why I should think he was a very wicked fellow, and I hope no one would look into such a book, or sing such a song.

Stock. And yet it must certainly be the clergy, who are scoffed at in that verse, it being their professed business to teach us to think and be serious.

Will. Ay, master, and now you have opened my eyes, I think I can make some of those comparisons myself between the spirit of the Bible, and the spirit of these songs.

'Bring the flask, the goblet bring,'

won't stand very well in company with the threat of the prophet: *Wo unto them that rise up early, that they may mingle strong drink.*

Stock. Ay, Will; and these thoughtless people who live up to their singing, seem to be the very people described in another place as glorying in their intemperance, and acting what their songs describe:—*They look at the wine, and say it is red, it moveth itself aright in the cup.*

Will. I do hope I shall for the future not only become more careful what songs I sing myself, but also not to keep company with those who sing nothing else but what in my sober judgment, I now see to be wrong.

Stock. As we shall have no *body* in the world to come, it is a pity not only to make our pleasures here consist entirely in the delights of animal life, but to make our very songs consist in extolling and exalting those delights which are unworthy of the man as well as of the Christian. If, through temptation or weakness, we fall into errors, let us not establish and confirm them by picking up all the songs and scraps of verses which excuse, justify, and commend sin. That time is short, is a reason given by these song mongers why we should give into greater indulgences. That time is short, is a reason given by the apostle why we should enjoy our dearest comforts as if we enjoyed them not.

Now, Will, I hope you will see the importance of so managing, that our diversions (for diversions of some kind we all require,) may be as carefully chosen as our other employments. For to make them such as effectually drive out of our minds all that the Bible and the minister have been putting into them, seems to me as imprudent as it is unchristian. But this is not all. Such sentiments as these songs contain, set off by the prettiest music, heightened by liquor, and all the noise and spirit of what is called jovial company, all this, I say, not only puts every thing that is right out of the mind, but puts every thing that is wrong into it. Such songs, therefore, as tend to promote levity, thoughtlessness, loose imaginations, false views of life, forgetfulness of death, contempt of whatever is serious, and neglect of whatever is sober, whether they be love songs, or drinking songs, will not, cannot be sung by any man or any woman who makes a serious profession of Christianity.*

* It is with regret I have lately observed, that the fashionable author and singer of songs more loose, profane, and corrupt, than any of those here noticed, not only received a prize as the reward of his important services, but received also the public acknowledgments of an illustrious society for having contributed to the happiness of their country

THE HISTORY OF TOM WHITE, THE POST BOY.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

Tom White was one of the best drivers of a post-chaise on the Bath road. Tom was the son of an honest labourer at a little village in Wiltshire: he was an active industrious boy, and as soon as he was old enough he left his father, who was burdened with a numerous family, and went to live with farmer Hodges, a sober worthy man in the same village. He drove the wagon all the week; and on Sundays, though he was now grown up, the farmer required him to attend the Sunday school, carried on under the inspection of Dr. Shepherd, the worthy vicar, and always made him read his Bible in the evening after he had served his cattle; and would have turned him out of his service if he had ever gone to the ale-house for his own pleasure.

Tom by carrying some wagon loads of fagots to the Bear inn, at Devizes, made many acquaintances in the stable-yard. He soon learnt to compare his own carter's frock, and shoes thick set with nails, with the smart red jacket, and tight boots of the post-boys, and grew ashamed of his own homely dress; he was resolved to drive a chaise, to get money, and to see the world. Foolish fellow! he never considered that, though it is true, a wagoner works hard all day, yet he gets a quiet evening at home, and undisturbed rest at night. However, as there must be chaise-boys as well as plough-boys, there was no great harm in the change. The evil company to which it exposed him, was the chief mischief. He left farmer Hodges, though not without sorrow at quitting so kind a master, and got himself hired at the Black Bear.

Notwithstanding the temptations to which he was now exposed, Tom's good education stood by him for some time. At first he was frightened to hear the oaths and wicked words which are too often uttered in a stable-yard. However, though he thought it very wrong, he had not the courage to reprove it, and the next step to being easy at seeing others sin is to sin ourselves. By degrees he began to think it manly, and a mark of spirit in others to swear; though the force of good habits was so strong, that at first when he ventured to swear himself it was with fear, and in a low voice. But he was soon laughed out of his sheepishness, as they called it; and though he never became so profane and blasphemous as some of his companions (for he never swore in cool blood, or in mirth, as so many do) yet he would too often use a dreadful bad word when he was in a passion with his horses. And here I cannot but drop a hint on the deep folly as well as wickedness, of being in a great rage with poor beasts, who, not having the gift of reason, cannot be moved like human creatures, with all the wicked words that are said to them; though these dumb creatures, unhappily, having the gift of feeling, suffer as much as human creatures can do, at the cruel and unnecessary beatings given them. Tom had been bred up to think that drunkenness was a great sin, for he never saw farmer Hodges drunk in his life, and where a farmer is sober himself his men are less likely to drink, or if they do the master can reprove them with the better grace.

Tom was not naturally fond of drink, yet for the sake of being thought merry company, and a hearty fellow, he often drank more than he ought. As he had been used to go to church twice on a Sunday, while he lived with the farmer (who seldom used his horses on that day, except to carry his wife to church behind him) Tom felt a little uneasy when he was sent the very first Sunday a long journey with a great family; for I cannot conceal the truth, that too many gentlefolks will travel, when there is no necessity for it, on a Sunday, and when Monday would answer the end just as well. This is a great grief to all good and sober people, both rich and poor; and it is still more inexcusable in the great, who have every day at their command. However, he kept his thoughts to himself, though he could not now and then help thinking how quietly things were going on at the farmer's, whose wagoner on a Sunday led as easy life as if he had been a gentleman. But he soon lost all thoughts of this kind, and in time did not know a Sunday from a Monday. Tom went on prosperously, as it is called, for three or four years, got plenty of money, but saved not a shilling. As soon as his horses were once in the stable, whoever would might see them fed for Tom. He had other fish to fry.—Fives, cards, cudgel-playing, laying wagers, and keeping loose company, each of which he at first disliked, and each of which he soon learned to practise, ran away with all his money, and all his spare time; and though he was generally in the way as soon as the horses were ready (because if there was no driving there was no pay) yet he did not care whether the carriage was clean or dirty, if the horses looked well or ill, if the harness was whole, or the horses were shod. The certainty that the gains of to-morrow would make up for the extravagance of to-day, made him quite thoughtless and happy; for he was young, active, and healthy, and never foresaw that a rainy day might come, when he would want what he now squandered.

One day being a little flustered with liquor as he was driving his return chaise through Brentford, he saw just before him another empty carriage, driven by one of his acquaintance: he whipped up his horses, resolving to outstrip the other, and swearing dreadfully that he would be at the Red Lion first—for a pint—'Done,' cried the other—a wager. Both cut and spurred the poor beasts with the usual fury, as if their credit had been really at stake, or their lives had depended on this foolish contest. Tom's chaise had now got up to that of his rival, and they drove along side of each other with great fury and many imprecations. But in a narrow part Tom's chaise being in the middle, with his antagonist on one side, and a cart driving against him on the other, the horses reared, the carriages

got entangled; Tom roared out a great oath to the other to stop, which he either could not, or would not do, but returned an horrid imprecation that he would win the wager if he was alive.—Tom's horses took fright, and he himself was thrown to the ground with great violence.—As soon as he could be got from under the wheels, he was taken up senseless, his leg was broken in two places, and his body much bruised. Some people whom the noise had brought together, put him in the post-chaise in which the wagoner kindly assisted, but the other driver seemed careless and indifferent, and drove off, observing with a brutal coolness, I am sorry I have lost my pint; I should have beat him hollow, had it not been for this *little accident.* Some gentlemen who came out of the inn, after reprimanding this savage, inquired who he was, wrote to inform his master, and got him discharged: resolving that neither they nor any of their friends would ever employ him, and he was long out of place, and nobody ever cared to be driven by him.

Tom was taken to one of those excellent hospitals with which London abounds. His agonies were dreadful, his leg was set, and a high fever came on. As soon as he was left alone to reflect on his condition, his first thought was that he should die, and his horror was inconceivable. Alas! said he, what will become of my poor soul? I am cut off in the very commission of three great sins:—I was drunk, I was in a horrible passion, and I had oaths and blasphemies in my mouth. He tried to pray, but he could not; his mind was all distraction, and he thought he was so very wicked that God would not forgive him; because, says he, I have sinned against light and knowledge; I have had a sober education, and good examples; I was bred in the fear of God, and the knowledge of Christ, and I deserve nothing but punishment. At length he grew light-headed, and there was little hope of his life. Whenever he came to his senses for a few minutes, he cried out, O! that my old companions could now see me, surely they would take warning by my sad fate, and repent before it is too late.

By the blessing of God on the skill of the surgeon, and the care of the nurses, he however, grew better in a few days. And here let me stop to remark, what a mercy it is that we live in a christian country, where the poor, when sick, or lame, or wounded, are taken as much care of as any gentry; nay, in some respects more, because in hospitals and infirmaries there are more doctors and surgeons to attend, than most private gentlefolks can afford to have at their own houses, whereas *there never was an hospital in the whole heathen world.* Blessed be God for this, among the thousand other excellent fruits of the christian religion! A religion which, like its Divine founder, while its grand object is the salvation of men's souls, teaches us also to relieve their bodily wants. It directs us never to forget that He who forgave sins, healed diseases, and while he preached the Gospel, fed the multitude.

It was eight weeks before Tom could be taken out of bed. This was a happy affliction; for by the grace of God, this long sickness and solitude gave him time to reflect on his past life. He began seriously to hate those darling sins which had brought him to the brink of ruin. He could now pray heartily; he confessed and lamented his iniquities, with many tears, and began to hope that the mercies of God, through the merits of a Redeemer, might yet be extended to him on his sincere repentance. He resolved never more to return to the same evil courses, but he did not trust in his own strength, but prayed that God would give him grace for the future, as well as pardon for the past. He remembered, and he was humbled at the thought, that he used to have short fits of repentance, and to form resolutions of amendment, in his wild and thoughtless days; and often when he had a bad head-ache after a drinking bout, or had lost his money at all-fours, he vowed never to drink or play again. But as soon as his head was well and his pockets recruited, he forgot all his resolutions. And how should it be otherwise? for he trusted in his own strength, he never prayed to God to strengthen him, nor ever avoided the next temptation. He thought that amendment was a thing to be set about at any time; he did not know that *it is the grace of God which bringeth us to repentance.*

The case was now different. Tom began to find that *his strength was perfect weakness,* and that he could do nothing without the divine assistance, for which he prayed heartily and constantly. He sent home for his Bible and Prayer book, which he had not opened for two years, and which had been given him when he left the Sunday school. He spent the chief part of his time in reading them, and derived great comfort, as well as great knowledge, from this employment of his time. The study of the Bible filled his heart with gratitude to God, who had not cut him off in the midst of his sins; but had given him space for repentance; and the agonies he had lately suffered with his broken leg increased his thankfulness, that he had escaped the more dreadful pain of eternal misery. And here let me remark what encouragement this is for rich people to give away Bibles and good books, and not to lose all hope, though, for a time, they see little or no good effect from it. According to all appearance, Tom's books were never likely to do him any good, and yet his generous benefactor, who had cast his bread upon the waters, found it after many days; for this Bible, which had lain untouched for years, was at last made the instrument of his reformation. God will work in his own good time, and in his own way, but *our* zeal and our exertions are the means by which he commonly chooses to work.

As soon as he got well, and was discharged from the hospital, Tom began to think he must return to get his bread. At first he had some scruples about going back to his old employ: but, says he sensibly enough, gentlefolks must travel, travellers must have chaises, and chaises must have drivers· 'tis a very honest calling, and I don't know that goodness belongs to one sort of business more than another; and he who can be good in a state of great temptation, provided the calling be lawful, and the temptations are not of his own seeking, and he be diligent

in prayer, may be better than another man for aught I know: and *all that belongs to us is, to do our duty in that state of life in which it shall please God to call us;* and to leave events in God's hand. Tom had rubbed up his catechism at the hospital, and 'tis a pity that people don't look at their catechism sometimes when they are grown up; for it is full as good for men and women as it is for children; nay, better; for though the answers contained in it are intended for children to *repeat,* yet the duties enjoined in it are intended for men and women to put in *practice.* It is, if I may so speak, the very grammar of Christianity and of our church, and they who understand every part of their catechism thoroughly, will not be ignorant of any thing which a plain Christian need know.

Tom now felt grieved that he was obliged to drive on Sundays. But people who are in earnest and have their hearts in a thing, can find helps in all cases. As soon as he had set down his company at their stage, and had seen his horses fed, says Tom, a man who takes care of his horses, will generally think it right to let them rest an hour or two at least. In every town it is a chance but there may be a church open during part of that time. If the prayers should be over, I'll try hard for the sermon; and if I dare not stay to the sermon it is a chance but I may catch the prayers; it is worth trying for, however; and as I used to think nothing of making a push, for the sake of getting an hour to gamble, I need not grudge to take a little pains extraordinary to serve God. By this watchfulness he soon got to know the hours of service at all the towns on the road he travelled; and while the horses fed, Tom went to church; and it became a favourite proverb with him, that *prayers and provender hinder no man's journey;* and I beg leave to recommend Tom's maxim to all travellers; whether master or servant, carrier or coachman.

At first his companions wanted to laugh and make sport of this—but when they saw that no lad on the road was up so early or worked so hard as Tom; when they saw no chaise so neat, no glasses so bright, no harness so tight, no driver so diligent, so clean, or so civil, they found he was no subject to make sport at. Tom indeed was very careful in looking after the linch pins; in never giving his horses too much water when they were hot; nor whatever was his haste, would he ever gallop them up hill, strike them across the head, or when tired, cut and slash them, or gallop over the stones, as soon as he got into town, as some foolish fellows do. What helped to cure Tom of these bad practices, was that remark he met with in the Bible, that *a good man is merciful to his beast.* He was much moved one day on reading the prophet Jonah, to observe what compassion the great God of Heaven and earth had for poor beasts: for one of the reasons there given why the Almighty was unwilling to destroy the great city of Nineveh was, *because there was much cattle in it.* After this, Tom never could bear to see a wanton stroke inflicted. Doth God care for horses, said he, and shall man be cruel to them?

Tom soon grew rich for one in his station: for every gentleman on the road would be driven by no other lad if *careful Tom* was to be had. Being diligent, he *got* a great deal of money; being frugal, he *spent* but little: and having no vices, he *wasted* none. He soon found out that there was some meaning in that text which says, that *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as that which is to come:* for the same principles which make a man sober and honest, have also a natural tendency to make him healthy and rich; while a drunkard and a spendthrift can hardly escape being sick and a beggar. Vice is the parent of misery in both worlds.

After a few years Tom begged a holiday, and made a visit to his native village; his good character had got thither before him. He found his father was dead, but during his long illness Tom had supplied him with money, and by allowing him a trifle every week, had had the honest satisfaction of keeping him from the parish. Farmer Hodges was still living, but being grown old and infirm, he was desirous to retire from business. He retained a great regard for his old servant, Tom; and finding he was worth money, and knowing he knew something of country business, he offered to let him a small farm at an easy rate, and promised his assistance in the management for the first year, with the loan of a small sum of money, that he might set out with a pretty stock. Tom thanked him with tears in his eyes, went back and took a handsome leave of his master, who made him a present of a horse and cart, in acknowledgment of his long and faithful services; for, says he, I have saved many horses by Tom's care and attention, and I could well afford to do the same by every servant who did the same by me; and should be a richer man at the end of every year by the same generosity, provided I could meet with just and faithful servants who deserve the same rewards. Tom was soon settled in his new farm, and in less than a year had got every thing neat and decent about him. Farmer Hodge's long experience and friendly advice, joined to his own industry and hard labour, soon brought the farm to great perfection. The regularity, sobriety, peaceableness, and piety of his daily life, his constant attendance at church twice every Sunday, and his decent and devout behaviour when there, soon recommended him to the notice of Dr. Shepherd, who was still living a pattern of zeal, activity, and benevolence to all parish priests. The doctor soon began to hold up Tom, or, as we must now more properly term him, Mr. Thomas White, to the imitation of the whole parish, and the frequent and condescending conversation of this worthy clergyman contributed no less than his preaching to the improvement of his new parishioner in piety.

Farmer White soon found out that a dairy could not well be carried on without a mistress, and began to think seriously of marrying; he prayed to God to direct him in so important a business. He knew that a tawdry, vain, dressy girl was not likely to make good cheese and butter, and that a worldly ungodly woman would make a sad wife and mistress of a family. He soon heard of a young woman of excellent character, who had been bred up by the vicar's

ady, and still lived in the family as upper maid. She was prudent, sober, industrious and religious. Her neat, modest, and plain appearance at church (for she was seldom seen any where else out of her master's family) was an example to all persons in her station, and never failed to recommend her to strangers, even before they had an opportunity of knowing the goodness of her character. It was her character, however, which recommended her to farmer White. He knew that *favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised*:—ay, and not only praised, but chosen too, says farmer White, as he took down his hat from the nail on which it hung, in order to go and wait on Dr. Shepherd, to break his mind and ask his consent; for he thought it would be a very unhandsome return for all the favours he was receiving from his minister, to decoy away his faithful servant from her place without his consent.

This worthy gentleman, though sorry to lose so valuable a member of his little family, did not scruple a moment about parting with her, when he found it would be so greatly to her advantage. Tom was agreeably surprised to hear she had saved fifty pounds by her frugality. The doctor married them himself, farmer Hodges being present.

In the afternoon of the wedding day, Dr. Shepherd condescended to call on farmer and Mrs. White, to give a few words of advice on the new duties they had entered into; a common custom with him on those occasions. He often took an opportunity to drop, in the most kind and tender way, a hint upon the great indecency of making marriages, christenings, and above all, funerals, days of riot and excess, as is too often the case in country villages. The expectation that the vicar might possibly drop in, in his walks, on these festivals, often restrained excessive drinking, and improper conversation, even among those who were not restrained by higher motives, as farmer and Mrs. White were.

What the doctor said was always in such a cheerful, good-humoured way, that it was sure to increase the pleasure of the day, instead of damping it. 'Well, farmer,' said he, 'and you, my faithful Sarah, any other friend might recommend peace and agreement to you on your marriage; but I, on the contrary, recommend cares and strifes.'* The company stared—but Sarah, who knew that her old master was a facetious gentleman, and always had some meaning behind, looked serious. 'Cares and strife, sir, said the farmer, 'what do you mean?'—'I mean,' said he, 'for the first, that your cares shall be who shall please God most, and your strifes, who shall serve him best, and do your duty most faithfully. Thus, all your cares and strifes being employed to the highest purposes, all petty cares and worldly strifes shall be at an end.'

'Always remember, that you have, both of you, a better friend than each other.' The company stared again, and thought no woman could have so good a friend as her husband. 'As you have chosen each other from the best motives,' continued the doctor, 'you have every reasonable ground to hope for happiness; but as this world is a soil in which troubles and misfortunes will spring up; troubles from which you cannot save one another; misfortunes which no human prudence can avoid: then remember, 'tis the best wisdom to go to that friend who is always near, always willing, and always able to help you; and that friend is God.'

* See Dodd's Sayings

'Sir,' said farmer White, 'I humbly thank you for all your kind instructions, of which I shall now stand more in need than ever, as I shall have more duties to fulfil. I hope the remembrance of my past offences will keep me humble, and the sense of my remaining sin will keep me watchful. I set out in the world, sir, with what is called a good-natural disposition, but I soon found to my cost, that without God's grace that will carry a man but a little way. A good temper is a good thing, but nothing but the fear of God can enable one to bear up against temptation, evil company, and evil passions. The misfortune of breaking my leg, as I then thought it, has proved the greatest blessing of my life. It showed me my own weakness, the value of the Bible, and the goodness of God. How many of my brother drivers have I seen, since that time, cut off in the prime of life by drinking, or sudden accident, while I have not only been spared, but blessed and prospered. O sir!' it would be the joy of my heart, if some of my old comrades, good-natured, civil fellows (whom I can't help loving) could see, as I have done, the danger of evil courses before it is too late. Though they may not hearken to you, sir, or any other minister they may believe *me* because I have been one of them: and I can speak from experience, of the great difference there is, even as to worldly comfort, between a life of sobriety and a life of sin. I could tell them, sir, not as a thing I have read in a book, but as a truth I feel in my own heart, that to fear God and keep his commandments, will not only bring a man peace at last, but will make him happy *now*. And I will venture to say, sir, that all the stocks, pillories, prisons, and gibbets in the land, though so very needful to keep bad men in order, yet will never restrain a good man from committing evil half so much as that single text, *How shall I do this great wickedness' and sin against God?*' Dr. Shepherd condescended to approve of what the farmer had said, kindly shook him by the hand, and took leave.

PART II.

The Way to Plenty, or the second part of Tom White. Written in 1795, the year of scarcity.

Tom White, as we have shown in the first part of this history, from an idle post boy was become a respectable farmer. God had blessed his industry, and he had prospered in the world. He was sober and temperate, and, as was the natural consequence, he was active and healthy. He was industrious and frugal, and he became prosperous in his circumstances. This is in the

ordinary course of Providence. But it is not a certain and necessary rule. *God maketh his sun to shine on the just and on the unjust.* A man who uses every honest means of thrift and industry, will, in most cases, find success attend his labours. But still, the *race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong.* God is sometimes pleased, for wise ends, to disappoint all the worldly hopes of the most upright man. His corn may be smitten by a blight; his barns may be consumed by fire; his cattle may be carried off by distemper. And to these, and other misfortunes, the good man is as liable as the spendthrift or the knave. Success is the *common* reward of industry, but if it were its *constant* reward, the industrious would be tempted to look no further than the present state. They would lose one strong ground of their faith. It would set aside the scripture scheme. This world would then be looked on as a state of reward, instead of trial, and we should forget to look to a day of final retribution.

Farmer White never took it into his head, that, because he paid his debts, worked early and late, and ate the bread of carefulness, he was therefore to come into no misfortune like other folk, but was to be free from the common trials and troubles of life. He knew that prosperity was far from being a sure mark of God's favour, and had read in good books, and especially in the Bible, of the great poverty and afflictions of the best of men. Though he was no great scholar, he had sense enough to observe, that a time of public prosperity was not always a time of public virtue; and he thought that what was true of a whole nation might be true of one man. So the more he prospered the more he prayed that prosperity might not corrupt his heart. And when he saw lately signs of public distress coming on, he was not half so much frightened as some others were, because he thought it might do us good in the long run; and he was in hope that a little poverty might bring on a little penitence. The great grace he laboured after was that of a cheerful submission. He used to say, that if the Lord's prayer had only contained those four little words, *Thy will be done*, it would be worth more than the biggest book in the world without them.

Dr. Shepherd, the worthy vicar (with whom the farmer's wife had formerly lived as housekeeper) was very fond of taking a walk with him about his grounds, and he used to say that he learnt as much from the farmer as the farmer did from him. If the doctor happened to observe, I am afraid these long rains will spoil this fine piece of oats, the farmer would answer, but then, sir, think how good it is for the grass. If the doctor feared the wheat would be but indifferent, the farmer was sure the rye would turn out well. When grass failed, he did not doubt but turnips would be plenty. Even for floods and inundations he would find out some way to justify Providence. 'Tis better, said he, to have our lands a little overflowed, than that the springs should be dried up, and our cattle faint for lack of water. When the drought came, he thanked God that the season would be healthy; and the high winds, which frightened others, he said, served to clear the air. Whoever, or whatever was wrong, he was always sure that Providence was in the right. And he used to say, that a man with ever so small an income, if he had but frugality and temperance, and would cut off all vain desires, and cast his care upon God, was richer than a lord who was tormented by vanity and covetousness. When he saw others in the wrong, he did not, however, abuse them for it, but took care to avoid the same fault. He had sense and spirit enough to break through many old, but very bad customs of his neighbours. If a thing is wrong in itself (said he one day to farmer Hodges) a whole parish doing it can't make it right. And as to its being an old custom, why, if it be a good one, I like it the better for being old, because it has had the stamp of ages, and the sanction of experience on its worth. But if it be old as well as bad, that is another reason for my trying to put an end to it, that we may not mislead our children as our fathers have misled us.

The Roof-Raising.

Some years after he was settled, he built a large new barn. All the workmen were looking forward to the usual holiday of roof-raising. On this occasion it was a custom to give a dinner to the workmen, with so much liquor after it, that they got so drunk that they not only lost the remaining half day's work, but they were not always able to work the following day.

Mrs. White provided a plentiful dinner for roof-raising, and gave each man his mug of beer. After a hearty meal they began to grow clamorous for more drink. The farmer said, 'My lads, I don't grudge you a few gallons of ale merely for the sake of saving my liquor, though that is some consideration, especially in these dear times; but I never will, knowingly, help any man to make a beast of himself. I am resolved to break through a bad custom. You are now well refreshed. If you will go cheerfully to your work, you will have half a day's pay to take on Saturday night more than you would have if this afternoon were wasted in drunkenness. For this your families will be the better; whereas, were I to give you more liquor, when you have already had enough, I should help to rob them of their bread. But I wish to show you, that I have your good at heart full as much as my profit. If you will now go to work, I will give you all another mug at night when you leave off. Thus your time will be saved, your families helped, and my ale will not go to make reasonable creatures worse than brute beasts.'

Here he stopped. 'You are in right on't, master,' said Tom the thatcher; 'you are a hearty man, farmer,' said John Plane, the carpenter 'Come along, boys,' said Tim Brick the mason: so they all went merrily to work, fortified with a good dinner. There was only one drunken surly fellow that refused; this was Dick Guzzle, the smith.—Dick never works above two or three days in the week, and spends the others at the Red Lion. He swore, that if the farmer did not give him as much liquor as he liked at roof-raising, he would not strike another stroke, but would leave the job unfinished, and he might get hands where he could. Farmer White took him at his word, and paid him

off directly: glad enough to get rid of such a sot, whom he had only employed from pity to a large and almost starving family. When the men came for their mug in the evening, the farmer brought out the remains of the cold gammon; they made a hearty supper, and thanked him for having broken through a foolish custom, which was afterwards much left off in that parish, though Dick would not come into it, and lost most of his work in consequence.

Farmer White's labourers were often complaining, that things were so dear that they could not buy a bit of meat. He knew it was partly true, but not entirely; for it was before these very hard times that their complaints began. One morning he stept out to see how an outhouse which he was thatching went on. He was surprised to find the work at a stand. He walked over to the thatcher's house. 'Tom,' said he, 'I desire that piece of work may be finished directly. If a shower comes my grain will be spoiled.' 'Indeed, master, I shan't work to-day, nor to-morrow neither,' said Tom.—'You forget that 'tis Easter Monday, and to-morrow is Easter Tuesday. And so on Wednesday I shall thatch away, master.—But it is hard if a poor man, who works all the seasons round, may not enjoy these few holydays, which come but once a year.'

'Tom,' said the farmer, 'when these days were first put into our prayer-book, the good men who ordained them to be kept, little thought that the time would come when *holyday* should mean *drunken-day*, and that the seasons which they meant to distinguish by superior piety, should be converted into seasons of more than ordinary excess. How much dost think now I shall pay thee for this piece of thatch? 'Why, you know, master, you have let it to me by the great. I think between this and to-morrow night, as the weather is so fine, I could clear about four shillings, after I have paid my boy; but thatching does not come often, and other work is not so profitable.' 'Very well, Tom; and how much now do you think you may spend in these two holydays?' 'Why, master, if the ale is pleasant, and the company merry, I do not expect to get off for less than three shillings.' 'Tom, can you do pounds, shillings, and pence?' 'I can make a little score, master, behind the kitchen door, with a bit of chalk, which is as much as I want.' 'Well, Tom, add the four shillings you would have earned to the three you intend to spend, what does that make?' 'Let me see! three and four make seven. Seven shillings, master.' 'Tom, you often tell me the times are so bad that you can never buy a bit of meat. Now here is the cost of two joints at once: to say nothing of the sin of wasting time and getting drunk.' 'I never once thought of that,' said Tom. 'Now Tom,' said the farmer, 'if I were you, I would step over to butcher Jobbins's, buy a shoulder of mutton, which being left from Saturday's market you will get a little cheaper. This I would make my wife bake in a deep dish full of potatoes. I would then go to work, and when the dinner was ready I would go and enjoy it with my wife and children; you need not give the mutton to the brats, the potatoes will have all the gravy, and be very savoury for them.' 'Ay, but I have got no beer, master; the times are so hard that a poor man can't afford to brew a drop of drink now as we used to do.'

'Times are bad, and malt is very dear, Tom, and yet both don't prevent you from spending seven shillings in keeping holyday. Now send for a quart of ale as it is to be a feast: and you will even then be four shillings richer than if you had gone to the public house. I would have you put by these four shillings, till you can add a couple to them; with this I would get a bushel of malt, and my wife should brew it, and you may take a pint of your own beer at home of a night, which will do you more good than a gallon at the Red Lion.' 'I have a great mind to take your advice, master, but I shall be made such fun of at the Lion! they will so laugh at me if I don't go!' 'Let those laugh that win, Tom.' 'But master, I have got a friend to meet me there.' 'Then ask your friend to come and eat a bit of your cold mutton at night, and here is sixpence for another pot, if you will promise to brew a small cask of your own.' 'Thank you, master, and so I will; and I won't go to the Lion. Come boy, bring the helm, and fetch the ladder.' And so Tom was upon the roof in a twinkling. The barn was thatched, the mutton bought, the beer brewed, the friend invited, and the holyday enjoyed.

The Sheep Shearing

Dr. Shepherd happened to say to farmer White one day, that there was nothing that he disliked more than the manner in which sheep-shearing and harvest-home were kept by some in his parish. 'What,' said the good doctor, 'just when we are blest with a prosperous gathering in of these natural riches of our land, the fleece of our flocks; when our barns are crowned with plenty, and we have, through the Divine blessing on our honest labour, reaped the fruits of the earth in due season; is that very time to be set apart for ribaldry, and riot, and drunkenness? Do we thank God for his mercies, by making ourselves unworthy and unfit to enjoy them? When he crowns the year with his goodness, shall we affront him by our impiety? It is more than a common insult to his providence; it is a worse than brutal return to *Him* who openeth his hand and filleth all things living with plenteousness.'

'I thank you for the hint, sir,' said the farmer. 'I am resolved to rejoice though, and others shall rejoice with me: and we will have a merry night on't.'

So Mrs. White dressed a very plentiful supper of meat and pudding; and spread out two tables. The farmer sat at the head of one, consisting of some of his neighbours, and all his work-people. At the other sat his wife, with two long benches on each side of her. On these benches sat all the old and infirm poor, especially those who lived in the work-house, and had no day of festivity to look forward to in the whole year but this. On the grass, in the little court, sat the children of his labourers, and of the other poor, whose employment it had been to gather flowers, and dress and adorn the horns of the ram; for the farmer did not wish to put an end

to an old custom, if it was innocent.—His own children stood by the table, and he gave them plenty of pudding, which they carried to the children of the poor, with a little draught of cider to every one. The farmer who never sat down without begging a blessing on his meal, did it with suitable solemnity on the present joyful occasion.

Dr. Shepherd practised one very useful method, which I dare say was not peculiar to himself; a method of which I doubt not other country clergymen have found the advantage. He was often on the watch to observe those seasons when a number of his parishioners were assembled together, not only at any season of festivity, but at their work. He has been known to turn a walk through a hay-field to good account; and has been found to do as much good by a few minutes discourse with a little knot of reapers, as by a Sunday's sermon. He commonly introduced his religious observations by some questions relating to their employment; he first gained their affections by his kindness, and then converted his influence over them to their soul's good. The interest he took in their worldly affairs opened their hearts to the reception of those divine truths which he was always earnest to impress upon them. By these methods too he got acquainted with their several characters, their spiritual wants, their individual sins, dangers, and temptations, which enabled him to preach with more knowledge and successful application, than those ministers can do who are unacquainted with the state of their congregations. It was a remark of Dr. Shepherd, that a thorough acquaintance with human nature was one of the most important species of knowledge a clergyman could possess.

The sheep-shearing feast, though orderly and decent, was yet hearty and cheerful. Dr. Shepherd dropped in with a good deal of company he had at his house, and they were much pleased. When the doctor saw how the aged and infirm poor were enjoying themselves, he was much moved; he shook the farmer by the hand and said, 'But thou, when thou makest a feast, call the blind, and the lame, and the halt, they cannot recompense thee, but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.'

'Sir,' said the farmer, ''tis no great matter of expense; I kill a sheep of my own; potatoes are as plenty as blackberries, with people who have a little forethought. I save much more cider in the course of a year by never allowing any carousing in my kitchen, or drunkenness in my fields, than would supply many such feasts as these, so that I shall be never the poorer at Christmas. It is cheaper to make people happy, sir, than to make them drunk. The doctor and the ladies condescended to walk from one table to the other, and heard many merry stories, but not one profane word, or one indecent song: so that he was not forced to the painful necessity either of reproving them, or leaving them in anger. When all was over, they sung the sixty-fifth Psalm, and the ladies all joined in it; and when they got home to the vicarage to tea, they declared they liked it better than any concert.

The Hard Winter.

In the famous cold winter of the year 1795, it was edifying to see how patiently farmer White bore that long and severe frost. Many of his sheep were frozen to death, but he thanked God that he had still many left. He continued to find in-door work that his men might not be out of employ. The season being so bad, which some others pleaded as an excuse for turning off their workmen, he thought a fresh reason for keeping them. Mrs. White was so considerate, that just at that time she lessened the number of her hogs, that she might have more whey and skim-milk to assist poor families. Nay, I have known her to live on boiled meat for a long while together, in a sickly season, because the pot liquor made such a supply of broth for the sick poor. As the spring came on, and things grew worse, she never had a cake, a pie, or a pudding in her house; notwithstanding she used to have plenty of these good things, and will again I hope, when the present scarcity is over; though she says she will never use such white flour again, even if it should come down to five shillings a bushel.

All the parish now began to murmur. Farmer Jones was sure the frost had killed the wheat. Farmer Wilson said the rye would never come up. Brown, the maltster, insisted the barley was dead at the root. Butcher Jobbins said beef would be a shilling a pound. All declared there would not be a hop to brew with. The orchards were all blighted; there would not be apples enough to make a pie; and as to hay there would be none to be had for love nor money. 'I'll tell you what,' said farmer White, 'the season is dreadful; the crops unpromising just now; but 'tis too early to judge. Don't let us make things worse than they are. We ought to comfort the poor, and you are driving them to despair. Don't you know how much God was displeased with the murmurs of his chosen people? And yet, when they were tired of manna he sent them quails; but all did not do. Nothing satisfies grumblers. We have a promise on our side, that *there shall be seed-time and harvest time to the end.* Let us then hope for a good day, but provide against an evil one. Let us rather prevent the evil before it is come upon us, than sink under it when it comes. Grumbling cannot help us; activity can. Let us set about planting potatoes in every nook and corner, in case the corn *should* fail, which, however, I don't believe will be the case. Let us mend our management before we are driven to it by actual want. And if we allow our honest labourers to plant a few potatoes for their families in the headlands of our ploughed fields, or other waste bits of ground, it will do us no harm, and be a great help to them. The way to lighten the load of any public calamity is not to murmur at it but put a hand to lessen it.

The farmer had many temptations to send his corn at an extravagant price to *a certain seaport town*, but as he knew that it was intended to export it against law, he would not be tempted to encourage unlawful gain; so he thrashed out a small mow at a time, and sold it to the neigh-

bouring poor far below the market-price. He served his own workmen first. This was the same to them as if he had raised their wages, and even better, as it was a benefit of which their families were sure to partake. If the poor in the next parish were more distressed than his own, he sold them at the same rate. For, said he, there is no distinction of parishes in heaven; and though charity begins at home, yet it ought not to end there.

He had been used in good times now and then to catch a hare or a partridge, as he was qualified; but he now resolved to give up that pleasure. So he parted from a couple of spaniels he had: for he said he could not bear that his dogs should be eating the meat, or the milk, which so many men, women, and children wanted.

The White Loaf.

One day, it was about the middle of last July, when things seemed to be at the dearest, and the rulers of the land had agreed to set the example of eating nothing but coarse bread, Dr. Shepherd read, before sermon in the church, their public declaration, which the magistrates of the county sent him, and which they had also signed themselves. Mrs. White, of course, was at church, and commended it mightily. Next morning the doctor took a walk over to the farmer's, in order to settle further plans for the relief of the parish. He was much surprised to meet Mrs. White's little maid Sally with a very small white loaf, which she had been buying at a shop. He said nothing to the girl, as he never thought it right to expose the faults of a mistress to her servants; but walked on, resolving to give Mrs. White a severe lecture for the first time in his life. He soon changed his mind, for on going into the kitchen, the first person he saw was Tom the thatcher, who had had a sad fall from a ladder; his arm, which was slipped out of his sleeve, was swelled in a frightful manner. Mrs. White was standing at the dresser making the little white loaf into a poultice, which she laid upon the swelling in a large clean old linen cloth.

'I ask your pardon, my good Sarah,' said the doctor; 'I ought not, however appearances were against you, to have suspected that so humble and prudent a woman as you are, would be led either to indulge any daintines of your own, or to fly in the face of your betters, by eating white bread while they are eating brown. Whenever I come here, I see it is not needful to be rich in order to be charitable. A bountiful rich man would have sent Tom to a surgeon, who would have done no more for him than you have done; for in those inflammations the most skilful surgeon could only apply a poultice. Your kindness in dressing the wound yourself, will, I doubt not, perform the cure at the expense of that threepenny loaf and a little hog's lard. And I will take care that Tom shall have a good supply of rice from the subscription.' 'And he shan't want for skim-milk,' said Mrs. White; 'and was he the best lord in the land in the state he is in, a dish of good rice milk would be better for him than the richest meat.'

The Parish Meeting.

On the tenth of August, the vestry held another meeting, to consult on the best method of further assisting the poor. The prospect of abundant crops now cheered every heart. Farmer White, who had a mind to be a little jocular with his desponding neighbours, said, 'Well, neighbour Jones, all the wheat was killed, I suppose! the barley is all dead at the root!' Farmer Jones looked sheepish, and said, 'To be sure the crops had turned out better than he thought.'—'Then,' said Dr. Shepherd, 'let us learn to trust Providence another time; let our experience of his past goodness strengthen our faith.'

Among other things, they agreed to subscribe for a large quantity of rice, which was to be sold out to the poor at a very low price, and Mrs. White was so kind as to undertake the trouble of selling it. After their day's work was over, all who wished to buy at these reduced rates, were ordered to come to the farm on the Tuesday evening. Dr. Shepherd dropped in at the same time, and when Mrs. White had done weighing her rice, the doctor spoke as follows:

'My honest friend, it has pleased God, for some wise end, to visit this land with a scarcity, to which we have been but little accustomed. There are some idle, evil-minded people, who are on the watch for the public distresses; not that they may humble themselves under the mighty hand of God (which is the true use to be made of all troubles) but that they may benefit themselves by disturbing the public peace. Those people, by riot and drunkenness, double the evil which they pretend to cure. Riot will complete our misfortunes; while peace, industry, and good management, will go near to cure them. Bread, to be sure, is uncommonly dear. Among the various ways of making it cheaper, one is to reduce the quality of it, another to lessen the quantity we consume. If we cannot get enough of coarse wheaten bread, let us make it of other grain. Or let us mix one half of potatoes, and one half of wheat. This last is what I eat in my own family; it is pleasant and wholesome. Our blessed Saviour ate barley bread, you know, as we are told in the last month's Sunday reading of the Cheap Repository,* which I hope you have all heard; as I desired the master of the Sunday-school to read it just after evening service, when I know many of the parents are apt to call in at the school. This is a good custom, and one of those little books shall be often read at that time.

'My good women, I truly feel for you at this time of scarcity; and I am going to show my good will, as much by my advice as my subscription. It is my duty, as your friend and minister, to tell you, that one half of your present hardships is owing to *bad management*. I often meet your children without shoes and stockings, with great luncheons of the very whitest bread, and that three times a day. Half that quantity, and still less if it were coarse, put into a dish of good onion or leek porridge, would

* See Cheap Repository, Tract on the Scarcity, printed for T. Evans, Long-lane, West Smithfield, London.

make them an excellent breakfast. Many too, of the very poorest of you, eat your bread hot from the oven; this makes the difference of one loaf in five; I assure you 'tis what I cannot afford to do. Come, Mrs. White, you must assist me a little. I am not very knowing in these matters myself; but I know that the rich would be twice as charitable as they are, if the poor made a better use of their bounty. Mrs. White, do give these poor women a little advice how to make their pittance go further than it now does. When you lived with me you were famous for making us nice cheap dishes, and I dare say you are not less notable, now you manage for yourself.'

'Indeed, neighbours,' said Mrs. White, 'what the good doctor says is very true. A halfpenny worth of oatmeal, or groats, with a leek or onion, out of your own garden, which costs nothing, a bit of salt, and a little coarse bread, will breakfast your whole family. It is a great mistake at any time to think a bit of meat is so ruinous, and a great load of bread so cheap. A poor man gets seven or eight shillings a week; if he is careful he brings it home. I dare not say how much of this goes for tea in the afternoon, now sugar and butter are so dear, because I should have you all upon me; but I will say, that too much of this little goes even for bread, from a mistaken notion that it is the hardest fare. This, at all times, but particularly just now, is bad management. Dry peas, to be sure, have been very dear lately; but now they are plenty enough. I am certain then, that if a shilling or two of the seven or eight was laid out for a bit of coarse beef, a sheep's head, or any such thing, it would be well bestowed. I would throw a couple of pounds of this into the pot, with two or three handsful of gray peas, an onion, and a little pepper. Then I would throw in cabbage or turnip, and carrot; or any garden stuff that was most plenty; let it stew two or three hours, and it will make a dish fit for his majesty. The working men should have the meat; the children don't want it; the soup will be thick and substantial, and requires no bread.'

Rice Milk.

'You who can get skim-milk, as all our workmen can, have a great advantage. A quart of this, and a quarter of a pound of the rice you have just bought, a little bit of alspice, and brown sugar, will make a dainty and cheap dish.'

'Bless your heart!' muttered Amy Grumble, who looked as dirty as a cinder-wench, with her face and fingers all daubed with snuff: 'rice milk, indeed! it is very nice to be sure for those who can dress it, but we have not a bit of coal; rice is no use to us without firing;' 'and yet,' said the doctor, 'I see your tea-kettle boiling twice every day, as I pass by the poor-house, and fresh butter at thirteen-pence a pound on your shelf.' 'O dear sir,' cried Amy, 'a few sticks serve to boil the tea-kettle.'—'And a few more,' said the doctor, 'will boil the rice milk, and give twice the nourishment at a quarter of the expense.'

Rice Pudding.

'Pray, Sarah,' said the doctor, 'how did you use to make that pudding my children were so fond of? And I remember, when it was cold, we used to have it in the parlour for supper.' 'Nothing more easy,' said Mrs. White: 'I put half a pound of rice, two quarts of skim-milk, and two ounces of brown sugar.' 'Well,' said the doctor, 'and how many will this dine?' 'Seven or eight, sir.' 'Very well, and what will it cost?'—'Why, sir, it did not cost you so much, because we baked it at home, and I used our own milk; but it will not cost above seven pence to those who pay for both. Here, too, bread is saved.'

'Pray, Sarah, let me put in a word,' said farmer White: 'I advise my men to raise each a large bed of parsnips. They are very nourishing, and very profitable. Sixpenny worth of seed, well sowed and trod in, will produce more meals than four sacks of potatoes; and what is material to you who have so little ground, it will not require more than an eighth part of the ground which the four sacks will take. Providence having contrived by the very formation of this root that it shall occupy but a very small space. Parsnips are very good the second day warmed in the frying pan, and a little rasher of pork, or bacon, will give them a nice flavour.'

Dr. Shepherd now said, 'as a proof of the nourishing quality of parsnips, I was reading in a history book this very day, that the American Indians make a great part of their bread of parsnips, though Indian corn is so famous; it will make a little variety too.'

A Cheap Stew.

'I remember,' said Mrs. White, 'a cheap dish, so nice that it makes my mouth water. I peel some raw potatoes, slice them thin, put the slices into a deep frying-pan, or pot with a little water, an onion, and a bit of pepper. Then I got a bone or two of a breast of mutton, or a little strip of salt pork and put into it. Cover it down close, keep in the steam, and let it stew for an hour.'

'You really give me an appetite, Mrs. White, by your dainty receipts,' said the doctor. 'I am resolved to have this dish at my own table.' 'I could tell you another very good dish, and still cheaper,' answered she. 'Come, let us have it,' cried the doctor. 'I shall write all down as soon as I get home, and I will favour any body with a copy of these receipts who will call at my house.'—'And I will do more, sir,' said Mrs. White, 'for I will put any of these women in the way how to dress it the first time, if they are at a loss. But this is my dish:

'Take two or three pickled herrings, put them into a stone jar, fill it up with potatoes, and a little water, and let it bake in the oven till it is done. I would give one hint more,' added she; 'I have taken to use nothing but potatoe starch; and though I say it, that should not say it, nobody's linen in a common way looks better than ours.'

The doctor now said, 'I am sorry for one hardship which many poor people labour under: I mean the difficulty of getting a little milk. I wish all farmer's wives were as considerate as you are, Mrs. White. A little milk is a great comfort to the poor, especially when their chil-

dren aie sick; and I have known it answer to the seller as well as to the buyer, to keep a cow or two on purpose to sell it by the quart, instead of making butter and cheese.

'Sir, said farmer White, 'I beg leave to say a word to the men, if you please, for all your advice goes to the women. If you will drink less gin, you may get more meat. If you abstain from the ale-house, you may, many of you, get a little one-way beer at home.'—'Ay, that we can farmer,' said poor Tom, the thatcher, who was now got well. 'Easter Monday for that—I say no more. A word to the wise.' The farmer smiled and went on: 'The number of public houses in many a parish, brings on more hunger and rags, than all the taxes in it, heavy as they are. All the other evils put together hardly make up the sum of that one. We are now raising a fresh subscription for you. This will be our rule of giving. We will not give to sots, gamblers, and Sabbath-breakers. Those who do not set their young children to work on week-days, and send them to school and church on Sundays, deserve little favour. No man should keep a dog till he has more food than his family wants. If he feeds them at home, they rob his children; if he starves them, they rob his neighbours. We have heard in a neighbouring city, that some people carried back the subscription loaves, because they were too coarse; but we hope better things of you.' Here Betty Plane begged, with all humility, to put in a word. 'Certainly,' said the doctor, 'we will listen to all modest complaints, and try to redress them.' 'You are pleased to say, sir,' said she, 'that we might find much comfort from buying coarse bits of beef. And so we might, but you do not know, sir, that we could seldom get them, even when we had the money, and times were so bad.' 'How so, Betty?' 'Sir, when we go to butcher Jobbins, for a bit of shin, or any other lean piece, his answer is, 'You can't have it to-day. The cook at the great house has bespoke it for gravy, or the doctor's maid (begging your pardon, sir,) has just ordered it for soup.'—Now, if such kind gentlefolk were aware that this gravy and soup not only consume a great deal of meat, which, to be sure, those have a right to do who can pay for it; but that it takes away those coarse pieces which the poor would buy, if they bought at all. For, indeed, the rich have been very kind, and I don't know what we should have done without them.'

'I thank you for the hint, Betty,' said the doctor, 'and I assure you I will have no more gravy soup. My garden will supply me with soups that are both wholesomer and better; and I will answer for my lady at the great house, that she will do the same. I hope this will become a general rule, and then we shall expect that butchers will favour you in the prices of the coarse pieces, if *we* who are rich, buy nothing but the prime. In our gifts we shall prefer, as the farmer has told you, those who keep steadily to their work. Such as come to the vestry for a loaf, and do not come to church for the sermon, we shall mark; and prefer those who come constantly, whether there are any gifts or not. But there is one rule from which we never will depart. Those who have been seen aiding, or abetting any riot, any attack on butchers, bakers, wheat-mows, mills, or millers, we will not relieve; but with the quiet, contented, hard-working man, I will share my last morsel of bread. I shall only add, though it has pleased God to send us this visitation as a punishment, yet we may convert this short trial into a lasting blessing, if we all turn over a new leaf. Prosperity had made most of us careless. The thoughtless profusion of some of the rich could only be exceeded by the idleness and bad management of some of the poor. Let us now at last adopt that good old maxim, *every one mend one.* And may God add his blessing.'

The people now cheerfully departed with their rice, resolving as many of them as could get milk, to put one of Mrs. White's receipts in practice, and an excellent supper they had.

THE HISTORY OF HESTER WILMOT.

BEING THE SECOND PART OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Hester Wilmot was born in the parish of Weston, of parents who maintained themselves by their labour; they were both of them ungodly, it is no wonder therefore they were unhappy. They lived badly together, and how could they do otherwise? for their tempers were very different, and they had no religion to smooth down this difference, or to teach them that they ought to bear with each other's faults. Rebecca Wilmot was a proof that people may have some right qualities, and yet be but bad characters, and utterly destitute of religion. She was clean, notable and industrious. Now I know some folks fancy that the poor who have these qualities need have no other, but this is a sad mistake, as I am sure every page in the Bible would show; and it is a pity people do not consult it oftener. They direct their ploughing and sowing by the information of the Almanac, why will they not consult the Bible for the direction of their hearts and lives? Rebecca was of a violent, ungovernable temper; and that very neatness which is in itself so pleasing, in her became a sin, for her affection to her husband and children was quite lost in an over-anxious desire to have her house reckoned the nicest in the parish. Rebecca was also a proof that a poor woman may be as vain as a rich one, for it was not so much the comfort of neatness, as the praise of neatness, which she coveted. A spot on her hearth, or a bit of rust on a brass candlestick, would throw her into a violent passion. Now it is very right to keep the hearth clean and the candlestick bright, but it is very wrong

so to set one's affections on a hearth or a candlestick, as to make one's self unhappy if any trifling accident happens to them; and if Rebecca had been as careful to keep her heart without spot, or her life without blemish, as she was to keep her fire-irons free from either, she would have been held up in this history, not as a warning, but as a pattern, and in that case her nicety would have come in for a part of the praise. It was no fault in Rebecca, but a merit, that her oak table was so bright you could almost see to put your cap on in it; but it was no merit but a fault, that when John, her husband, laid down his cup of beer upon it so as to leave a mark, she would fly out into so terrible a passion that all the children were forced to run to corners; now poor John having no corner to run to, ran to the ale-house, till that which was at first a refuge too soon became a pleasure.

Rebecca never wished her children to learn to read, because she said it would only serve to make them lazy, and she herself had done very well without it. She would keep poor Hester from church to stone the space under the stairs in fine patterns and flowers. I don't pretend to say there was any harm in this little decoration, it looks pretty enough, and it is better to let the children do that than nothing. But still these are not things to set one's heart upon; and besides Rebecca only did it as a trap for praise; for she was sulky and disappointed if any ladies happened to call in and did not seem delighted with the flowers which she used to draw with a burnt stick on the whitewash of the chimney corners. Besides all this finery was often done on a Sunday, and there is a great deal of harm in doing right things at a wrong time, or in wasting much time on things which are of no real use, or in doing any thing at all out of vanity. Now I beg that no lazy slattern of a wife will go and take any comfort in her dirt from what is here said against Rebecca's nicety; for I believe, that for one who makes her husband unhappy through neatness, twenty do so by dirt and laziness. All excuses are wrong, but the excess of a good quality is not so common as the excess of a bad one; and not being so obvious, perhaps, for that very reason requires more animadversion.

John Wilmot was not an ill-natured man, but he had no fixed principle. Instead of setting himself to cure his wife's faults by mild reproof and good example, he was driven by them into still greater faults himself. It is a common case with people who have no religion when any cross accident befals them, instead of trying to make the best of a bad matter, instead of considering their trouble as a trial sent from God to purify them, or instead of considering the faults of others as a punishment for their own sins, instead of this I say, what do they do, but either sink down at once into despair, or else run for comfort into evil courses. Drinking is the common remedy for sorrow, if that can be called a remedy, the end of which is to destroy soul and body. John now began to spend all his leisure hours at the Bell. He used to be fond of his children: but when he could not come home in quiet, and play with the little ones, while his wife dressed him a bit of hot supper, he grew in time not to come home at all. He who has once taken to drink can seldom be said to be guilty of one sin only; John's heart became hardened. His affection for his family was lost in self-indulgence. Patience and submission, on the part of the wife, might have won much upon a man of John's temper; but instead of trying to reclaim him, his wife seemed rather to delight in putting him as much in the wrong as she could, that she might be justified in her constant abuse of him. I doubt whether she would have been as much pleased with his reformation as she was with always talking of his faults, though I know it was the opinion of the neighbours, that if she had taken as much pains to reform her husband by reforming her own temper, as she did to abuse him and expose him, her endeavours might have been blessed with success. Good Christians, who are trying to subdue their own faults, can hardly believe that the ungodly have a sort of savage satisfaction in trying, by indulgence of their own evil tempers, to lessen the happiness of those with whom they have to do. Need we look any farther for a proof of our own corrupt nature, when we see mankind delight in sins which have neither the temptation of profit or the allurement of pleasure, such as plaguing, vexing, or abusing each other.

Hester was the eldest of their five children she was a sharp sensible girl, but at fourteen years old she could not tell a letter, nor had she ever been taught to bow her knee to Him who made her, for John's or rather Rebecca's house, had seldom the name of God pronounced in it, except to be blasphemed.

It was just about this time, if I mistake not, that Mrs. Jones set up her Sunday-school, of which Mrs. Betty Crew was appointed mistress, as has been before related. Mrs. Jones finding that none of the Wilmots were sent to school, took a walk to Rebecca's house, and civilly told her, she called to let her know that a school was opened, to which she desired her to send her children on Sunday following, especially her eldest daughter Hester. 'Well,' said Rebecca, 'and what will you give her if I do?' 'Give her!' replied Mrs. Jones, 'that is rather a rude question, and asked in a rude manner: however, as a soft answer turneth away wrath, I assure you that I will give her the best of learning; I will teach her to *fear God and keep his commandments*.' 'I would rather you would teach her to fear me, and keep my house clean,' said this wicked woman. 'She shan't come, however, unless you will pay her for it.' 'Pay her for it!' said the lady, 'will it not be reward enough that she will be taught to read the word of God without any expense to you? For though many gifts both of books and clothing will be given the children, yet you are not to consider those gifts so much in the light of payment as an expression of good will in your benefactors.' 'I say,' interrupted Rebecca, 'that Hester shan't go to school. Religion is of no use that I know of but to make people hate their own flesh and blood; and I see no good in learning but to make folks proud, and lazy, and dirty. I cannot tell a letter myself, and, though I say it, that should not say it, there is not a notabler woman in the parish.' 'Pray,' said Mrs. Jones mildly

do you think that young people will disobey their parents the more for being taught to fear God?' 'I don't think any thing about it,' said Rebecca; 'I shan't let her come, and there's the long and short of the matter. Hester has other fish to fry; but you may have some of these little ones if you will:' 'No,' said Mrs. Jones, 'I will not; I have not set up a nursery, but a school. I am not at all this expense to take crying babes out of the mother's way, but to instruct reasonable beings in the road to eternal life; and it ought to be a rule in all schools not to take the troublesome *young* children unless the mother will try to spare the *elder* ones, who are capable of learning.' 'But,' said Rebecca, 'I have a young child which Hester must nurse while I dress dinner. And she must iron the rags, and scour the irons, and dig the potatoes, and fetch the water to boil them.' 'As to nursing the child, that is indeed a necessary duty, and Hester ought to stay at home part of the day to enable you to go to church; and families should relieve each other in this way, but as to all the rest they are no reasons at all, for the irons need not be scoured so often, and the rags should be ironed, and the potatoes dug, and the water fetched on the Saturday; and I can tell you that neither your minister here, nor your Judge hereafter, will accept of any such excuses.'

All this while Hester staid behind pale and trembling, lest her unkind mother should carry her point. She looked up at Mrs. Jones with so much love and gratitude, as to win her affection, and this good lady went on trying to soften this harsh mother. At last Rebecca condescended to say, 'Well I don't know but I may let her come now and then when I can spare her, provided I find you make it worth her while.' All this time she had never asked Mrs. Jones to sit down, nor had once bid her young children be quiet, though they were crying and squalling the whole time. Rebecca fancied this rudeness was the only way she had of showing she thought herself to be as good as her guest, but Mrs. Jones never lost her temper. The moment she went out of the house, Rebecca called out loud enough for her to hear, and ordered Hester to get the stone and a bit of sand to scrub out the prints of that dirty woman's shoes. Hester in high spirits cheerfully obeyed, and rubbed out the stains so neatly, that her mother could not help lamenting that so handy a girl was going to be spoiled, by being taught godliness, and learning any such nonsense.

Mrs. Jones who knew the world, told her agent Mrs. Crew, that her grand difficulty would arise not so much from the children as the parents. These, said she, are apt to fall into that sad mistake, that because their children are poor, and have a little of this world's goods, the mothers must make it up to them in false indulgence. The children of the gentry are much more reproved and corrected for their faults, and bred up in far stricter discipline. He was a king who said, *Chasten thy son, and let not thy rod spare for his crying*. But do not lose your patience; the more vicious the children are, you must remember the more they stand in need of your instruction. When they are bad, comfort yourself with thinking how much worse they would have been but for you; and what a burden they would become to society if these evil tempers were to receive no check. The great thing which enabled Mrs. Crew to teach well, was the deep insight she had got into the corruption of human nature. And I doubt if any one can make a thoroughly good teacher of religion and morals, who wants the master-key to the heart. Others indeed may teach knowledge, decency, and good manners; but those, however valuable, are not Christianity. Mrs. Crew, who knew that out of the heart proceed lying, theft, and all that train of evils which begin to break out even in young children, applied her labours to correct this root of evil. But though a diligent, she was a humble teacher, well knowing that unless the grace of God blessed her labours, she should but labour in vain.

Hester Wilmot never failed to attend the school, whenever her perverse mother would give her leave, and her delight in learning was so great, that she would work early and late to gain a little time for her book. As she had a quick capacity, she learned soon to spell and read, and Mrs. Crew observing her diligence, used to lend her a book to carry home, that she might pick up a little at odd times. It would be well if teachers would make this distinction. To give, or lend books to those who take no delight in them is an useless expense; while it is kind and right to assist well-disposed young people with every help of this sort. Those who love books seldom hurt them, while the slothful who hate learning, will wear out a book more in a week, than the diligent will do in a year. Hester's way was to read over one question in her catechism, or one verse in her hymn book, by fire-light before she went to bed; this she thought over in the night; and when she was dressing herself in the morning, she was glad to find she always knew a little more than she had done the morning before. It is not to be believed how much those people will be found to have gained at the end of the year, who are accustomed to work up all the little odd ends and remnants of leisure; who value time even more than money; and who are convinced that minutes are no more to be wasted than pence. Nay, he who finds he has wasted a shilling may by diligence hope to fetch it up again; but no repentance or industry can ever bring back one wasted hour. My good young reader, if ever *you* are tempted to waste an hour, go and ask a dying man what he would give for that hour which you are throwing away, and according as he answers so do you act.

As her mother hated the sight of a book, Hester was forced to learn out of sight: it was no disobedience to do this, as long as she wasted no part of that time which it was her duty to spend in useful labour. She would have thought it a sin to have left her work for her book; but she did not think it wrong to steal time from her sleep, and to be learning an hour before the rest of the family were awake. Hester would not neglect the washing-tub, or the spinning-wheel, even to get on with her catechism; but she thought it fair to think over her questions, while she was washing and spinning. In a few months

she was able to read fluently in St. John's Gospel, which is the easiest. But Mrs. Crew did not think it enough that her children could read a chapter, she would make them understand it also. It is in a good degree owing to the want of religious knowledge in teachers, that there is so little religion in the world. Unless the Bible is laid open to the understanding, children may read from Genesis to the Revelation, without any other improvement than barely learning how to pronounce the words. Mrs. Crew found there was but one way to compel their attention; this was by obliging them to return back again to her the sense of what she had read to them, and this they might do in their own words, if they could not remember the words of Scripture. Those who had weak capacities would, to be sure, do this but very imperfectly; but even the weakest, if they were willing, would retain something. She so managed that *saying the catechism* was not merely an act of the memory, but of the understanding: for she had observed formerly that those who had learned the catechism in the common formal way, when they were children, had never understood it when they became men and women, and it remained in the memory without having made any impression on the mind. Thus this fine summary of the Christian religion is considered as little more than a form of words, the being able to repeat which, is a qualification for being confirmed by the bishop, instead of being considered as really containing those grounds of Christian faith and practice, by which they are to be confirmed Christians.

Mrs. Crew used to say to Mrs. Jones, those who teach the poor must indeed give line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, as they can receive it. So that teaching must be a great grievance to those who do not really make it a *labour of love.* I see so much levity, obstinacy, and ignorance, that it keeps my own forbearance in continual exercise, insomuch that I trust I am getting good myself, while I am doing good to others. No one, madam, can know till they try, that after they have asked a poor untaught child the same question nineteen times, they must not lose their temper, but go on and ask it the twentieth. Now and then, when I am tempted to be impatient, I correct myself by thinking over that active proof which our blessed Saviour requires of our love to him when he says, *Feed my lambs.*

Hester Wilmot had never been bred to go to church, for her father and mother had never thought of going themselves, unless at a christening in their own family, or at a funeral of their neighbours, both of which they considered merely as opportunities for good eating and drinking, and not as offices of religion.

As poor Hester had no comfort at home, it was the less wonder she delighted in her school, her Bible, and her church; for so great is God's goodness, that he is pleased to make religion a peculiar comfort to those who have no other comfort. The God whose name she had seldom heard but when it was *taken in vain*, was now revealed to her as a God of infinite power, justice, and holiness. What she read in her Bible, and what she felt in her own heart, convinced her she was a sinner, and her catechism said the same. She was much distressed one day on thinking over this promise which she had just made (in answer to the question which fell to her lot) *To renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh.* I say she was distressed on finding that these were not merely certain words which she was bound to repeat, but certain conditions which she was bound to perform. She was sadly puzzled to know how this was to be done, till she met with these words in her Bible: *My grace is sufficient for thee.* But still she was at a loss to know how this grace was to be obtained. Happily Mr. Simpson preached on the next Sunday from this text, *Ask and ye shall receive*, &c. In this sermon was explained to her the nature, the duty, and the efficacy of prayer. After this she opened her heart to Mrs. Crew, who taught her the great doctrines of Scripture, in a serious but plain way. Hester's own heart led her to assent to that humbling doctrine of the catechism, that *We are by nature born in sin;* and truly glad was she to be relieved by hearing of *That spiritual grace by which we have a new birth unto righteousness.* Thus her mind was no sooner humbled by one part than it gained comfort from another. On the other hand, while she was rejoicing in *a lively hope in God's mercy through Christ*, her mistress put her in mind that that was only the *true* repentance *by which we forsake sin.* Thus the catechism, explained by a pious teacher, was found to contain *all the articles of the Christian faith.*

Mrs. Jones greatly disapproved the practice of turning away the scholars because they were grown up. Young people, said she, want to be warned at sixteen more than they did at six, and they are commonly turned adrift at the very age when they want most instruction; when dangers and temptations most beset them. They are exposed to more evil by the leisure of a Sunday evening than by the business of a whole week: but then religion must be made pleasant, and instruction must be carried on in a kind, and agreeable, and familiar way. If they once dislike the teacher they will soon get to dislike what is taught, so that a master or mistress is in some measure answerable for the future piety of young persons, inasmuch as that piety depends on their manner of making religion pleasant as well as profitable.

To attend Mrs. Jones's evening instructions was soon thought not a task but a holiday. In a few months it was reckoned a disadvantage to the character of any young person in the parish to know that they did not attend the evening school. At first, indeed, many of them came only with a view to learn amusement; but, by the blessing of God, they grew fond of instruction, and some of them became truly pious. Mrs. Jones spoke to them on Sunday evening as follows:—'My dear young women, I rejoice at your improvement; but I rejoice with trembling. I have known young people set out well, who afterwards fell off. The heart is deceitful. Many like religious knowledge, who do not like the strictness of a religious life. I must therefore watch whether those who are diligent at

church and school, are diligent in their daily walk. Whether those who say they *believe* in God, really *obey* him. Whether they who profess to *love* Christ keep his *commandments*. Those who hear themselves commended for early piety, may learn to rest satisfied with the praise of man. People may get a knack at religious phrases without being religious; they may even get to frequent places of worship as an amusement, in order to meet their friends, and may learn to delight in a sort of *spiritual gossip*, while religion has no power in their hearts. But I hope better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though I thus speak.

What became of Hester Wilmot, with some account of Mrs. Jones's May-day feast for her school, my readers shall be told next month.

PART II.

The New Gown.

Hester Wilmot, I am sorry to observe, had been by nature peevish, and lazy; she would when a child, now and then slight her work, and when her mother was unreasonable she was too apt to return a saucy answer; but when she became acquainted with her own heart, and with the Scriptures, these evil tempers were, in a good measure, subdued, for she now learnt to imitate, not her violent mother, but *him who was meek and lowly*. When she was scolded for doing ill, she prayed for grace to do better; and the only answer she made to her mother's charge, 'that religion only served to make people lazy,' was to strive to do twice as much work, in order to prove that really made them diligent. The only thing in which she ventured to disobey her mother was, that when she ordered her to do week day's work on a Sunday, Hester cried, and said, she did not dare to disobey God; but to show that she did not wish to save her own labour, she would do a double portion of work on the Saturday night, and rise two hours earlier on Monday morning.

Once, when she had worked very hard, her mother told her she would treat her with a holyday the following Sabbath, and take her a fine walk to eat cakes and drink ale at Weston fair, which, though it was professed to be kept on the Monday, yet, to the disgrace of the village, always began on the Sunday evening.* Rebecca, who would on no account have wasted the Monday, which was a working day, in idleness and pleasure, thought she had a very good right to enjoy herself at the fair on the Sunday evening, as well as to take her children. Hester earnestly begged to be left at home, and her mother in a rage went without her. A wet walk, and more ale than she was used to drink, gave Rebecca a dangerous fever.—During this illness Hester, who would not follow her to a scene of dissolute mirth, attended her night and day, and denied herself necessaries that her sick mother might have comforts: and though she secretly prayed to God that this sickness might change her mother's heart, yet she never once reproached her, or put her in mind, that it was caught by indulging in a sinful pleasure.

Another Sunday night her father told Hester, he thought she had now been at school long enough for him to have a little good of her learning, so he desired she would stay at home and read to him. Hester cheerfully ran and fetched her Testament. But John fell a laughing, called her a fool, and said, it would be time enough to read the Testament to him when he was going to die, but at present he must have something merry. So saying, he gave her a song book which he had picked up at the Bell. Hester having cast her eyes over it, refused to read it, saying she did not dare offend God by reading what would hurt her own soul.—John called her a canting hypocrite; and said, he would put the Testament into the fire for that there was not a more merry girl than she was before she became religious.—Her mother for once took her part, not because she thought her daughter in the right, but because she was glad of any pretence to show her husband was in the wrong; though she herself would have abused Hester for the same thing if John had taken her part. John, with a shocking oath abused them both; and went off in a violent passion.—Hester, instead of saying one undutiful word against her father, took up a Psalter in order to teach her little sisters; but Rebecca was so provoked at her for not joining her in her abuse of her husband, that she changed her humour, said John was in the right, and Hester a perverse hypocrite, who only made religion a pretence for being undutiful to her parents. Hester bore all in silence, and committed her cause to Him *who judgeth righteously*. It would have been a great comfort to her if she had dared to go to Mrs. Crew, and to have joined in the religious exercises of the evening at school. But her mother refused to let her, saying it would only harden her heart in mischief. Hester said not a word, but after having put the little ones to bed, and heard them say their prayers out of sight, she went and sat down in her own little loft, and said to herself, it would be pleasant to me to have taught my little sisters to read, I thought it was my duty, for David has said, *Come ye children hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord*. It would have been still more pleasant to have passed the evening at school, because I am still ignorant, and fitter to learn than to teach; but I cannot do either without flying in the face of my mother; God sees fit to-night to change my pleasant duties into a painful trial. I give up my will, and I submit to the will of my father; but when he orders me to commit a known sin, then I dare not do it, because, in so doing, I must disobey my Father which is in heaven.

Now it so fell out, that this dispute happened on the very Sunday next before Mrs. Jones's yearly feast. On May-day all the school attended her to church, each in a stuff gown of

*This practice is too common. Those fairs which profess to be kept on Monday, commonly begin on the Sunday. It is much to be wished that magistrates would put a stop to it, as Mr Simpson did at Weston, at the request of Mrs Jones. There is another great evil worth the notice of justices. In many villages, during the fair, ale is sold at private houses, which have no license, to the great injury of sobriety and good morals.

their own earning, and a cap and white apron of her giving. After church there was an examination made into the learning and behaviour of the scholars; those who were most perfect in their chapters, and who brought the best character for industry, humility, and sobriety, received a Bible, or some other good book.

Now Hester had been a whole year hoarding up her little savings, in order to be ready with a new gown on the May-day feast. She had never got less than two shillings a week by her spinning, besides working for the family, and earning a trifle by odd jobs.—This money she faithfully carried to her mother every Saturday night, keeping back by consent, only twopence a-week towards the gown. The sum was complete, the pattern had long been settled, and Hester had only on the Monday morning to go to the shop, pay her money, and bring home her gown to be made. Her mother happened to go out early that morning to iron in a gentleman's family, where she usually staid a day or two, and Hester was busy putting the house in order before she went to the shop.

On that very Monday there was to be a meeting at the Bell of all the idle fellows in the parish. John Wilmot of course was to be there. Indeed he had accepted a challenge of the blacksmith to a batch at all-fours. The blacksmith was flush of money, John thought himself the best player; and that he might make sure of winning, he resolved to keep himself sober, which he knew was more than the other would do. John was so used to go upon tick for ale, that he got to the door of the Bell before he recollected that he could not keep his word with the gambler without money, and he had not a penny in his pocket, so he sullenly turned homewards. He dared not apply to his wife, as he knew he should be more likely to get a scratched face than a sixpence from her; but he knew that Hester had received two shillings for her last week's spinning on Saturday, and perhaps she might not yet have given it to her mother. Of the hoarded sum he knew nothing. He asked her if she could lend him half a crown, and he would pay her next day. Hester pleased to see him in good humour after what had passed the night before ran up and fetched down her little box, and in the joy of her heart that he now desired something she *could* comply with without wounding her conscience, cheerfully poured out her whole little stock upon the table. John was in raptures at the sight of three half-crowns and a sixpence, and eagerly seized it, box and all, together with a few hoarded halfpence at the bottom, though he had only asked to borrow half-a-crown. None but one whose heart was hardened by a long course of drunkenness could have taken away the whole, and for such a purpose. He told her she should certainly have it again next morning, and, indeed intended to pay it, not doubting but he should double the sum. But John overrated his own skill, or luck, for he lost every farthing to the blacksmith, and sneaked home before midnight, and quietly walked up to bed. He was quite sober, which Hester thought a good sign. Next morning she asked him, in a very humble way, for the money, which she said she would not have done, but that if the gown was not bought directly it would not be ready in time for the feast. John's conscience had troubled him a little for what he had done, for when he was not drunk he was not ill-natured, and he stammered out a broken excuse, but owned he had lost the money, and had not a farthing left. The moment Hester saw him mild and kind her heart was softened, and she begged him not to vex, adding, that she would be contented never to have a new gown as long as she lived, if she could have the comfort of always seeing him come home sober as he was last night. For Hester did not know that he had refrained from getting drunk, only that he might gamble with a better chance of success, and that when a gamester keeps himself sober, it is not that he may practice a virtue, but that he may commit a worse crime. 'I am indeed sorry for what I have done,' said he; 'you cannot go to the feast, and what will madam Jones say?'—'Yes, but I can, said Hester, 'for God looks not at the gown, but at the heart, and I am sure he sees mine full of gratitude at hearing you talk so kindly; and if I thought my dear father would change his present evil courses, I should be the happiest girl at the feast to-morrow.' John walked away mournfully, and said to himself, surely there must be something in religion, since it can thus change the heart. Hester was once a pert girl, and now she is as mild as a lamb. She was once an indolent girl, and now she is up with the lark. She was a vain girl, and would do any thing for a new riband; and now she is contented to go in rags to a feast at which every one else will have a new gown. She deprived herself of her gown to give me the money; and yet this very girl, so dutiful in some respects, would submit to be turned out of doors rather than read a loose book at my command, or break the Sabbath. I do not understand this; there must be some mystery in it. All this he said as he was going to work. In the evening he did not go to the Bell: whether it was owing to his new thoughts, or to his not having a penny in his pocket, I will not take upon me positively to say, but I believe it was a little of one and a little of the other.

As the pattern of the intended gown had long been settled in the family, and as Hester had the money by her, it was looked on as good as bought, so that she was trusted to get it brought home, and made in her mother's absence. Indeed, so little did Rebecca care about the school, that she would not have cared any thing about the gown, if her vanity had not made her wish that her daughter should be the best drest of any girl at the feast. Being from home, as was said before, she knew nothing of the disappointment. On May-day morning, Hester, instead of keeping from the feast, because she had not a new gown, or meanly inventing any excuse for wearing an old one, dressed herself out as neatly as she could in her poor old things, and went to join the school in order to go to church. Whether Hester had formerly indulged a little pride of heart, and talked of this gown rather too much, I am not quite sure; certain it is, there was a great hue and cry made at seeing Hester Wilmot, the neatest girl,

the most industrious girl in the school, come to the May-day feast in an old stuff gown, when every other girl was so creditably drest. Indeed, I am sorry to say, there were two or three much too smart for their station, and who had dizened themselves out in very improper finery, which Mrs. Jones made them take off before her. 'I mean this feast,' said she, 'as a reward of industry and piety, and not as a trial of skill who can be finest, and outvie the rest in show. If I do not take care, my feast will become an encouragement, not to virtue, but to vanity. I am so great a friend to decency of apparel, that I even like to see you deny your appetites, that you may be able to come decently dressed to the house of God. To encourage you to do this. I like to set apart this one day of innocent pleasure, against which you may be preparing all the year, by laying aside something every week towards buying a gown out of all your savings. But, let me tell you, that meekness and an humble spirit is of more value in the sight of God and good men, than the gayest cotton gown, or the brightest pink riband in the parish.'

Mrs. Jones for all this, was as much surprised as the rest at Hester's mean garb: but such is the power of a good character, that she gave her credit for a right intention, especially as she knew the unhappy state of her family. For it was Mrs. Jones's way, (and it is not a bad way,) always to wait, and inquire into the truth before she condemned any person of good character, though appearances were against them. As we cannot judge of people's motives, said she, we may, from ignorance, often condemn their best actions, and approve of their worst. It will be always time enough to judge unfavourably, and let us give others credit as long as we can, and then we in our turn, may expect a favourable judgment from others, and remember who had said, *Judge not, that ye be not judged.*

Hester was no more proud of what she had done for her farther, than she was humbled by the meanness of her garb; and notwithstanding Betty Stiles, one of the girls whose finery had been taken away, sneered at her, Hester never offered to clear herself, by exposing her father, though she thought it right, secretly to inform Mrs. Jones of what had past. When the examination of the girls began, Betty Stiles was asked some questions on the fourth and fifth commandments, which she answered very well. Hester was asked nearly the same questions, and, though she answered them no better than Betty had done, they were all surprised to see Mrs. Jones rise up, and give a handsome Bible to Hester, while she gave nothing to Betty. This girl cried out rather pertly, 'Madam, it is very hard that I have no book: I was as perfect as Hester.'—'I have often told you,' said Mrs. Jones, 'that religion is not a thing of the tongue but of the heart. That girl gives me the best proof that she has learned the fourth commandment to good purpose, who persists in keeping holy the Sabbath day, though commanded to break it by a parent whom she loves. And that girl best proves that she keeps the fifth, who gives up her own comfort, and clothing, and credit, *to honour and obey her father and mother*, even though they are not such as she could wish. Betty Stiles, though she could answer the questions so readily, went abroad last Sunday when she should have been at school, and refused to nurse her sick mother, when she could not help herself. Is this having learnt those two commandments to any good purpose?'

Farmer Hoskins, who stood by, whispered Mrs. Jones, 'Well, madam, now you have convinced even me of the benefit of religious instruction; now I see there is a meaning to it. I thought it was in at one ear and out at the other, and that a song was as well as a psalm; but now I have found the proof of the pudding is in the eating. I see your scholars must *do* what they *hear*, and *obey* what they *learn*. Why, at this rate, they will all be better servants for being really godly, and so I will add a pudding to next year's feast.'

The pleasure Hester felt in receiving a new Bible, made her forget that she had on an old gown. She walked to church in a thankful frame; but how great was her joy, when she saw, among a number of working men, her own father going into church. As she past by him. she cast on him a look of so much joy and affection that it brought tears into his eyes, especially when he compared her mean dress with that of the other girls, and thought who had been the cause of it. John, who had not been at church for some years, was deeply struck with the service. The confession with which it opens went to his heart. He felt, for the first time, that he was a *miserable sinner, and that there was no health in him.* He now felt compunction for sin in general, though it was only his ill-behaviour to his daughter which had brought him to church. The sermon was such as to strengthen the impression which the prayers had made; and when it was over, instead of joining the ringers, (for the belfry was the only part of the church John liked, because it usually led to the ale-house,) he quietly walked back to his work. It was, indeed, the best day's work he ever made. He could not get out of his head the whole day, the first words he heard at church; *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.* At night, instead of going to the Bell, he went home, intending to ask Hester to forgive him; but as soon as he got to the door, he heard Rebecca scolding his daughter for having brought such a disgrace on the family as to be seen in that old rag of a gown, and insisted on knowing what she had done with the money. Hester tried to keep the secret, but her mother declared she would turn her out of doors if she did not tell the truth. Hester was at last forced to confess she had given it to her father. Unfortunately for poor John, it was at this very moment that he opened the door. The mother now divided her fury between her guilty husband and her innocent child, till from words she fell to blows. John defended his daughter, and received some of the strokes intended for the poor girl. This turbulent scene partly put John's good resolution to flight, though the patience of Hester did him almost as much good

as the sermon he had heard. At length th poor girl escaped up stairs, not a little bruisec and a scene of much violence passed betwee John and Rebecca. She declared she woul not sit down to supper with such a brute, an set off to a neighbour's house, that she migh have the pleasure of abusing him the longer John, whose mind was much disturbed, wen up stairs without his supper. As he was pass ing by Hester's little room he heard her voice, and as he concluded she was venting bitter com plaints against her unnatural parents, he stop ped to listen, resolved to go in and comfort her. He stopped at the door, for, by the light of th moon, he saw her kneeling by her bedside, an praying so earnestly that she did not hear him As he made sure she could be praying for no thing but his death, what was her surprise tc hear these words: 'O Lord, have mercy upon my dear father and mother, teach me to lov them, to pray for them, and do them good; mak me more dutiful and more patient, that, adorn ing the doctrine of God, my Saviour, I may re commend his holy religion, and my dear parents may be brought to love and fear thee, through Jesus Christ.'

Poor John, who would never have been hard hearted if he had not been a drunkard, could not stand this, he fell down on his knees, embraced his child; and begged her to teach him how to pray. He prayed himself as well as he could, and though he did not know what words to use, yet his heart was melted; he owned he was a sinner, and begged Hester to fetch the prayer-book, and read over the confession with which he had been so struck at church. This was the pleasantest order she had ever obeyed. Seeing him deeply affected with a sense of sin she pointed out to him the Saviour of sinners and in this manner she passed some hours with her father, which were the happiest of her life such a night was worth a hundred cotton, or even silk gowns. In the course of the week Hester read over the confession, and some other prayers, to her father so often that he got them by heart, and repeated them while he was at work.—She next taught him the fifty-first psalm. At length he took courage to kneel down and pray before he went to bed. From that time he bore his wife's ill-humour much better than he had ever done, and, as he knew her to be neat, and notable, and saving, he began to think, that if her temper was not quite so bad, his home might still become as pleasant a place to him as ever the Bell had been; but unless she became more tractable he did not know what to do with his long evenings after the little ones were in bed, for he began, once more, to delight in playing with them. Hester proposed that she herself should teach him to read an hour every night, and he consented. Rebecca began to storm, from the mere trick she had got of storming; but finding that he now brought home all his earnings, and that she got both his money and his company, (for she had once loved him,) she began to reconcile herself to this new way of life. In a few months John could read a psalm. In learning to read it he also got it by heart, and this proved a little store for private devotion, and while he was mowing or reaping, he could call to mind a text to cheer his labour. He now went constantly to church, and often dropped in at the school on a Sunday evening to hear their prayers. He expressed so much pleasure at this, that one day Hester ventured to ask him if they should set up family prayer at home? John said he should like it mightily, but as he could not yet read quite well enough, he desired Hester to try to get a proper book and begin next Sunday night. Hester had bought of a pious hawker, for three halfpence,* the Book of prayers, printed for the Cheap Repository, and knew she should there find something suitable.

When Hester read the exhortation at the beginning of this little book, her mother, who sat in the corner, and pretended to be asleep, was so much struck that she could not find a word to say against it. For a few nights, indeed, she continued to sit still, or pretended to rock the young child while her husband and daughter were kneeling at their prayers. She expected John would have scolded her for this, and so perverse was her temper, that she was disappointed at his finding no fault with her. Seeing at last that he was very patient, and that though he prayed fervently himself he suffered her to do as she liked, she lost the spirit of opposition for want of something to provoke it. As her pride began to be subdued, some little disposi ion to piety was awakened in her heart.—By degrees she slid down on her knees, though at first it was behind the cradle, or the clock, or n some corner where she thought they would not see her. Hester rejoiced even in this outward change in her mother, and prayed that God would at last be pleased to touch her heart s he had done that of her father.

As John now spent no idle money, he had saved up a trifle by working over-hours; this he kindly offered to Hester to make up for the loss of her gown. Instead of accepting it, Hester told him, that as she herself was young and healthy, she should soon be able to clothe herself ut of her own savings, and begged him to make her mother a present of this gown, which he did. It had been a maxim of Rebecca, that t was better not to go to church at all, than go n an old gown. She had, however, so far conuered this evil notion, that she had lately gone retty often. This kindness of the gown touched er not a little, and the first Sunday she put it n Mr. Simpson happened to preach from this ext, *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to he humble.* This sermon so affected Rebecca hat she never once thought she had her new own on, till she came to take it off when she ent to bed, and that very night, instead of kulking behind, she knelt down by her husband, and joined in prayer with much fervour.

There was one thing sunk deep in Rebecca's ind; she had observed that since her husband ad grown religious he had been so careful not o give her any offence, that he was become crupulously clean; took off his dirty shoes be- re he sat down, and was very cautious not to ill a drop of beer on her shining table. Now

* These prayers may be had also divided into two rts, one fit for private persons, the other for families ice one halfpenny.

it was rather remarkable, that as John grew more neat, Rebecca grew more indifferent to neatness. But both these changes arose from the same cause, the growth of religion in their hearts. John grew cleanly from the fear of giving pain to his wife, while Rebecca grew indifferent from having discovered the sin and folly of an over-anxious care about trifles. When the heart is once given up to God, such vanities in a good degree die of themselves.

Hester continues to grow in grace, and in knowledge. Last Christmas-day she was appointed an under teacher in the school, and many people think that some years hence, if any thing should happen to Mrs. Crow, Hester may be promoted to be head mistress.

THE GRAND ASSIZES, &c.

OR GENERAL JAIL DELIVERY.

AN ALLEGORY.

THERE was in a certain country a great king, who was also a judge. He was very merciful, but he was also very just; for he used to say, that justice was the foundation of all goodness, and that indiscriminate and misapplied mercy was in fact injustice. His subjects were apt enough, in a general way, to extol his merciful temper, and especially those subjects who were always committing crimes which made them particularly liable to be punished by his justice. This last quality they constantly kept out of sight, till they had cheated themselves into a notion that he was too good to punish at all.

Now it had happened a long time before, that this whole people had broken their allegiance, and had forfeited the king's favour, and had also fallen from a very prosperous state in which he had originally placed them, having one and all become bankrupts. But when they were over head and ears in debt, and had nothing to pay, the king's son most generously took the whole burden of their debts on himself; and, in short, it was proposed that all their affairs should be settled, and their very crimes forgiven, (for they were criminals as well as debtors) provided only they would show themselves sincerely sorry for what they had done themselves, and be thankful for what had been done for them. I should however remark, that a book was also given them, in which a true and faithful account of their own rebellion was written; and of the manner of obtaining the king's pardon, together with a variety of directions for their conduct in time to come; and in this book it was particularly mentioned, that after having lived a certain number of years in a remote part of the same king's country, yet still under his eye and jurisdiction, there should be a *grand assizes*, when every one was to be publicly tried for his past behaviour; and after this trial was over, certain heavy punishments were to be inflicted on those who should have still persisted in their rebellion, and certain high premiums were to be bestowed as a gracious reward upon the penitent and obedient.

It may be proper here to notice, that this king's court differed in some respect from our courts of justice, being indeed a sort of court of appeal, to which questions were carried after they had been imperfectly decided in the common courts! And although with us all criminals are tried (and a most excellent mode of trial it is) by a jury of their peers, yet in this king's country the mode was very different; for since every one of the people had been in a certain sense criminals, the king did not think it fair to make them judges also. It would, indeed, have been impossible to follow in all respects the customs which prevail with us, for the crimes with which men are charged in our courts are mere *overt acts*, as the lawyers call them, that is, acts which regard the outward behaviour; such as the acts of striking, maiming, stealing, and so forth. But in this king's court it is not merely outward sins, but sins of the heart also which were to be punished. Many a crime, therefore, which was never heard of in the court of King's Bench, or at the Old Bailey, and which indeed could not be cognizable by these courts, was here to be brought to light, and was reserved for this great day. Among these were pride, and oppression, and envy, and malice, and revenge, and covetousness, and secret vanity of mind, and evil thoughts of all sorts, and all sinful wishes and desires. When covetousness, indeed, put men on committing robbery, or when malice drove them to acts of murder, then the common courts immediately judged the criminal, without waiting for these great assizes; nevertheless, since even a thief and murderer would now and then escape in the common courts, for want of evidence, or through some fault or other of the judge or jury, the escape was of little moment to the poor criminal, for he was sure to be tried again by this great king; and even though the man should have been punished in some sense before, yet he had now a farther and more lasting punishment to fear, unless, indeed, he was one of those who had obtained (by the means I before spoke of) this great king's pardon. The *sins of the heart*, however, were by far the most numerous sort of sins, which were to come before this great tribunal; and these were to be judged by this great king in person, and by none but himself; because he alone possessed a certain power of getting at all secrets.

I once heard of a certain king of Sicily, who built a whispering gallery in the form of an ear, through which he could hear every word his rebellious subjects uttered, though spoken ever so low. But this secret of the king of Sicily was nothing to what this great king possessed; for he had the power of knowing every thought which was conceived in the mind, though it never broke out into words, or proceeded to actions.

Now you may be ready to think, perhaps,

that these people were worse off than any others, because they were to be examined so closely, and judged so strictly. Far from it; the king was too just to expect bricks without giving them straw; he gave them, therefore, every help that they needed. He gave them a book of directions, as I before observed; and because they were naturally short-sighted, he supplied them with a glass for reading it, and thus the most dim-sighted might see, if they did not wilfully shut their eyes: but though the king *invited* them to open their eyes he did not *compel* them; and many remain stone blind all their lives with the book in their hand, because they would not use the glass, nor take the proper means for reading and understanding all that was written for them. The humble and sincere learned in time to see even that part of the book which was least plainly written; and it was observed that the ability to understand it depended more on the heart than the head; an evil disposition blinded the sight, while humility operated like an eye-salve.

Now it happened that those who had been so lucky as to escape the punishment of the lower courts, took it into their heads that they were all very good sort of people, and of course very safe from any danger at this *great assize*. This grand intended trial, indeed, had been talked of so much, and put off so long (for it had seemed long at least to these short-sighted people) that many persuaded themselves it would never take place at all; and far the greater part were living away therefore without ever thinking about it; they went on just as if nothing at all had been done for their benefit; and as if they had no king to please, no king's son to be thankful to, no book to guide themselves by, and as if the assizes were never to come about.

But with this king *a thousand years were as a day, for he was not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness.*—So at length the solemn period approached. Still, however, the people did not prepare for the solemnity, or rather, they prepared for it much as some of the people in our provincial towns are apt to prepare for the annual assize times; I mean by balls and feastings, and they saw their own trial come on, with as little concern as is felt by the people in our streets, when they see the judge's procession enter the town; they indeed comfort themselves that it is only those in the prisons who are guilty.

But when at last the day came, and every man found that he was to be judged for himself; and that somehow or other, all his secrets were brought out, and that there was now no escape, not even a short reprieve, things began to take a more serious turn. Some of the worst of the criminals were got together debating in an outer court of the grand hall; and there they passed their time, not in compunction and tears, not in comparing their lives with what was required in that book which had been given them, but they derived a fallacious hope by comparing themselves with such as had been still more notorious offenders.

One who had grown wealthy by rapine and oppression, but had contrived to keep within the letter of the law, insulted a poor fellow as a thief, because he had stolen a loaf of bread. 'You are far wickeder than I was,' said a citizen to his apprentice, 'for you drank and swore at the ale-house every Sunday night.' 'Yes,' said the poor fellow, 'but it was your fault that I did so, for you took no care of my soul, but spent all your Sabbaths in jaunting abroad or in rioting at home; I might have learnt, but there was no one to teach me; I might have followed a good example, but I saw only bad ones. I sinned against less light than you did.' A drunken journeyman, who had spent all his wages on gin, rejoiced that he had not spent a great estate in bribery at elections, as the lord of his manor had done, while a perjured elector boasted that he was no drunkard like the journeyman; and the member himself took comfort that he had never *received* the bribes which he had not been ashamed to *offer*.

I have not room to describe the awful pomp of the court, nor the terrible sounding of the trumpet which attended the judge's entrance, nor the sitting of the judge, nor the opening of the books, nor the crowding of the millions, who stood before him. I shall pass over the multitudes who were tried and condemned to dungeons and chains, and eternal fire, and to perpetual banishment from the presence of the king, which always seemed to be the saddest part of the sentence. I shall only notice further, a few who brought some plea of merit, and claimed a right to be rewarded by the king, and even deceived themselves so far as to think that his own book of laws would be their justification.

A thoughtless spendthrift advanced without any contrition, and said, 'that he had lived handsomely, and had hated the covetous whom God abhorreth; that he trusted in that passage of the book which said, that *covetousness was idolatry;* and that he therefore hoped for a favourable sentence.' Now it proved that this man had not only avoided covetousness, but that he had even left his wife and children in want through his excessive prodigality. The judge therefore immediately pointed to that place in the book where it is written, *he that provideth not for his household is worse than an infidel. He that liveth in pleasure is dead while he liveth;* 'thou,' said he, '*in thy life time, receivedst thy good things, and now thou must be tormented.*' Then a miser, whom hunger and hoarding had worn to skin and bone, crept forward, and praised the sentence passed on this extravagant youth, 'and surely,' said he, 'since he is condemned, I am a man that may make some plea to favour—I was never idle or drunk, I kept my body in subjection. I have been so self-denying that I am certainly a saint: I have loved neither father nor mother, nor wife nor children, to excess, in all this I have obeyed the book of the law.' Then the judge said, 'But where are thy works of mercy and thy labours of love, see that family which perished in thy sight last hard winter, while thy barns were overflowing; that poor family were my representatives; yet they were hungry, and thou gavest them no meat. *Go to, now thou rich man, weep and howl for the miseries that are come upon you. Your gold and your silver is cankered, and the rust of them*

shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire.'

Then came up one with a most self-sufficient air. He walked up boldly, having in one hand the plan of an hospital which he had built, and in the other the drawing of a statue, which was erecting for him in the country that he had just left, and on his forehead appeared, in gold letters, the list of all the public charities to which he had subscribed. He seemed to take great pleasure in the condemnation of the miser, and said, 'Lord, when saw I thee hungry and fed thee not, or in prison and visited thee not? I have visited the fatherless and widow in their affliction.' Here the judge cut him short, by saying, 'True, thou didst visit the fatherless, but didst thou fulfil equally that other part of my command, 'to keep thyself unspotted from the world.' No, thou wast conformed to the world in many of its sinful customs, 'thou didst follow a multitude to do evil; thou didst love the world and the things of the world; and the motive to all thy charities was not a regard to me but to thy own credit with thy fellow men. Thou hast done every thing for the sake of reputation, and now thou art vainly trusting in thy deceitful works, instead of putting all thy trust in my son, who has offered himself to be a surety for thee. Where has been that humility and gratitude to him which was required of thee. No, thou wouldst be thine own surety: thou hast trusted in thyself: thou hast made thy boast of thine own goodness; thou hast sought after and thou hast enjoyed the praise of men, and verily I say unto thee, 'thou hast had thy reward.'

A poor diseased blind cripple, who came from the very hospital which this great man had built, then fell prostrate on his face, crying out, 'Lord be merciful to me a sinner!' on which the judge, to the surprise of all, said, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' The poor man replied, 'Lord, I have done nothing!'—'But thou hast 'suffered well,' said the judge; 'thou hast been an example of patience and meekness, and though thou hadst but few talents, yet thou hast well improved those few; thou hadst time, this thou didst spend in the humble duties of thy station, and also in earnest prayer; thou didst pray even for that proud founder of the hospital, who never prayed for himself; thou wast indeed blind and lame, but it is no where said, my son give me thy feet, or thine eyes, but give me thy heart; and even the few faculties I did grant thee, were employed to my glory; with thine ears thou didst listen to my word, with thy tongue thou didst show forth my praise, 'enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

There were several who came forward, and boasted of some single and particular virtue, in which they had been supposed to excel. One talked of his generosity, another of his courage, and a third of his fortitude; but it proved on a close examination, that some of those supposed virtues were merely the effect of a particular constitution of body; that others proceeded from a false motive, and that not a few of them were actual vices, since they were carried to excess; and under the pretence of fulfilling one duty, some other duty was lost sight of; in short, these partial virtues were none of them practised in obedience to the will of the king, but merely to please the person's own humour, or to gain praise, and they would not, therefore, stand this day's trial, for 'he that had kept the whole law, and yet had wilfully and habitually offended in any one point, was declared guilty of breaking the whole.'

At this moment a sort of thick scales fell from the eyes of the multitude. They could now no longer take comfort, as they had done for so many years, by measuring their neighbours' conduct against their own. Each at once saw himself in his true light, and found, alas! when it was too late, that he should have made the book which had been given him his rule of practice before, since it now proved to be the rule by which he was to be judged. Nay, every one now thought himself even worse than his neighbour, because, while he only *saw* and *heard* of the guilt of others, he *felt* his own in all its aggravated horror.

To complete their confusion, they were compelled to acknowledge the justice of the judge who condemned them; and also to approve the favourable sentence by which thousands of other criminals had not only their lives saved, but were made happy and glorious beyond all imagination; not for any great merits which they had to produce, but in consequence of their sincere repentance, and their humble acceptance of the pardon offered to them by the king's son. One thing was remarkable, that whilst most of those who were condemned, never expected condemnation, but even claimed a reward for their supposed innocence or goodness, all who were really rewarded and forgiven were sensible that they owed their pardon to a mere act of grace, and they cried out with one voice, 'Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the praise!'

THE SERVANT MAN TURNED SOLDIER.

OR THE FAIR-WEATHER CHRISTIAN.

AN ALLEGORY.

WILLIAM was a lively young servant, who lived in a *great but very irregular family.* His place was on the whole, agreeable to him, and suited to his gay thoughtless temper. He found a plentiful table and a good cellar. There was, indeed, a great deal of work to be done, though it was performed with much disorder and confusion. The family in the main were not unkind to him, though they often contradicted and crossed him, especially when things went ill

with themselves. This, William never much liked, for he was always fond of having his own way. There was a merry, or rather a noisy and riotous servant's hall; for disorder and quarrels are indeed the usual effects of plenty and unrestrained indulgence. The men were smart, but idle; the maids were showy but licentious, and all did pretty much as they liked for a time, but the time was commonly short. The wages were reckoned high, but they were seldom paid, and it was even said by sober people, that the family was insolvent, and never fulfilled any of their flattering engagements, or their most positive promises; but still, notwithstanding their real poverty, things went on with just the same thoughtlessness and splendour, and neither master nor servants looked beyond the jollity of the present hour.

In this unruly family there was little church going, and still less praying at home. They pretended, indeed, in a general way, to believe in the Bible, but it was only an outward profession, few of them read it at all, and even of those who did read it still fewer were governed by it. There was indeed a Bible lying on the table in the great hall, which was kept for the purpose of administering an oath, but was seldom used on any other occasion, and some of the heads of the family were of opinion that this was its only real use, as it might serve to keep the lower parts of it in order.

William, who was fond of novelty and pleasure, was apt to be negligent of the duties of the house. He used to stay out on his errands, and one of his favourite amusements was going to the parade to see the soldiers exercise. He saw with envy how smartly they were dressed, listened with rapture to the music, and fancied that a soldier had nothing to do but to walk to and fro in a certain regular order, to go through a little easy exercise, in short, to live without fighting, fatigue, or danger.

O, said he, whenever he was affronted at home, what a fine thing it must be to be a soldier! to be so well dressed, to have nothing to do but to move to the pleasant sound of fife and drum, and to have so many people come to look at one, and admire one. O it must be a fine thing to be a soldier!

Yet when the vexation of the moment was over, he found so much ease and diversion in the great family, it was so suited to his low taste and sensual appetites, that he thought no more of the matter. He forgot the glories of a soldier, and eagerly returned to all the mean gratifications of the kitchen. His evil habits were but little attended to by those with whom he lived; his faults, among which were lying and swearing, were not often corrected by the family, who had little objection to those sins, which only offended God and did not much affect their own interest or property. And except that William was obliged to work rather more than he liked, he found little, while he was young and healthy, that was very disagreeable in this service. So he went on, still thinking, however, when things went a little cross, what a fine thing it was to be a soldier! At last one day as he was waiting at dinner, he had the misfortune to let fall a china dish, and broke it all to pieces. It was a curious dish, much valued by the family, as they pretended; this family were indeed apt to set a false fantastic value on things, and not to estimate them by their real worth. The heads of the family, who had generally been rather patient and good-humoured with William, as I said before, for those vices, which though offensive to God did not touch their own pocket, now flew out into a violent passion with him, called him a thousand hard names, and even threatened to horsewhip him for his shameful negligence.

William in a great fright, for he was a sad coward at bottom, ran directly out of the house to avoid the threatened punishment; and happening just at that very time to pass by the parade where the soldiers chanced to be then exercising, his resolution was taken in a moment. He instantly determined to be no more a slave, as he called it; he would return no more to be subject to the humours of a tyrannical family; no, he was resolved to be free; or at least, if he must serve, he would serve no master but the king.

William, who had now and then happened to hear from the accidental talk of the soldiers, that those who served the great family he had lived with, were slaves to their tyranny and vices, had also heard in the same casual manner, that the service of the king was *perfect freedom*. Now he had taken it into his head to hope that this might be a freedom to do evil, or at least to do nothing, so he thought it was the only place in the world to suit him.

A fine likely young man as William was, had no great difficulty to get enlisted. The few forms were soon settled, he received the bounty money as eagerly as it was offered, took the oaths of allegiance, was joined to the regiment and heartily welcomed by his new comrades. He was the happiest fellow alive. All was smooth and calm. The day happened to be very fine, and therefore William always reckoned upon a fine day. The scene was gay and lively, the music cheerful, he found the exercise very easy, and he thought there was little more expected from him.

He soon began to flourish away in his talk; and when he met with any one of his old fellow servants, he fell a prating about marches and counter-marches, and blockades, and battles, and sieges, and blood, and death, and triumphs, and victories, all at random, for these were words and phrases he had picked up without at all understanding what he said. He had no knowledge, and therefore he had no modesty, he had no experience and therefore he had no fears.

All seemed to go on swimmingly, for he had as yet no trial. He began to think with triumph what a mean life he had escaped from in the old quarrelsome family, and what a happy, honourable life he should have in the army. O there was no life like the life of a soldier!

In a short time, however, war broke out, his regiment was one of the first which was called out to actual and hard service. As William was the most raw of all the recruits he was the first to murmur at the difficulties and hardships, the cold and hunger, the fatigue and danger of being a soldier. O what watchings, and perils

and trials, and hardships, and difficulties he now thought attended a military life! Surely, said he, I could never have suspected all this misery when I used to see the men on the parade in our town

He now found, when it was too late, that all the field-days he used to attend, all the evolutions and exercises which he had observed the soldiers to go through in the calm times of peace and safety, were only meant to fit, train and qualify them, for the actual service which they were now sent out to perform by the command of the king.

The truth is, William often complained when there was no real hardship to complain of; for the common troubles of life fell out pretty much alike to the great family which William had left, and to the soldiers in the king's army. But the spirit of obedience, discipline, and self-denial of the latter seemed hardships to one of William's loose turn of mind. When he began to murmur, some good old soldier clapped him on the back, saying, cheer up lad, it is a kingdom you are to strive for, if we faint not, henceforth there is laid up for us a great reward, we have the king's word for it man. William observed, that to those who truly believed this, their labours were as nothing, but he himself did not at the bottom believe it; and it was observed, of all the soldiers who failed, the true cause was that they did not really believe the king's promise. He was surprised to see that those soldiers, who used to bluster and boast, and deride the assaults of the enemy, now began to fall away; while such as had faithfully obeyed the king's orders, and believed in his word, were sustained in the hour of trial. Those who had trusted in their own strength all fainted on the slightest attack, while those who had put on the armour of the king's providing, the sword, and the shield, and the helmet, and the breastplate, and whose feet were shod according to order, now endured hardship as good soldiers, and were enabled to fight the good fight.

An engagement was expected immediately. The men were ordered to prepare for battle. While the rest of the corps were so preparing, William's whole thoughts were bent on contriving how he might desert. But alas! he was watched on all sides, he could not possibly devise any means to escape. The danger increased every moment, the battle came on. William, who had been so sure and confident before he entered, flinched in the moment of trial, while his more quiet and less boastful comrades prepared boldly to do their duty. William looked about on all sides, and saw that there was no eye upon him, for he did not know that the king's eye was every where at once. He at last thought he spied a chance of escaping, not from the enemy, but from his own army. While he was endeavouring to escape, a ball from the opposite camp took off his leg. As he fell, the first words which broke from him were, while I was in my duty I was preserved; in the very act of deserting I am wounded. He lay expecting every moment to be trampled to death, but as the confusion was a little over, he was taken off the field by some of his own party, laid in a place of safety, and left to himself, after his wound was dressed.

The skirmish, for it proved nothing more, was soon over. The greater part of the regiment escaped in safety. William in the meantime suffered cruelly both in mind and body. To the pains of a wounded soldier, he added the disgrace of a coward, and the infamy of a deserter. O, cried he, why was I such a fool as to leave the *great family* I lived in, where there was meat and drink enough and to spare, only on account of a little quarrel? I might have made up that with them as we had done our former quarrels. Why did I leave a life of ease and pleasure, where I had only a little rub now and then, for a life of daily discipline and constant danger? Why did I turn soldier? O, what a miserable animal is a soldier!

As he was sitting in this weak and disabled condition, uttering the above complaints, he observed a venerable old officer, with thin gray locks on his head, and on his face, deep wrinkles engraved by time, and many an honest scar inflicted by war. William had heard this old officer highly commended for his extraordinary courage and conduct in battle, and in peace he used to see him cool and collected, devoutly employed in reading and praying in the interval of more active duties. He could not help comparing this officer with himself. I, said he, flinched and drew back, and would even have deserted in the moment of peril, and now in return, I have no consolation in the hour of repose and safety. I would not fight then, I cannot pray now. O why would I ever think of being a soldier? He then began afresh to weep and lament, and he groaned so loud that he drew the notice of the officer, who came up to him, kindly sat down by him, took him by the hand, and inquired with as much affection as if he had been his brother, what was the matter with him, and what particular distress, more than the common fortune of war it was which drew from him such bitter groans? 'I know something of surgery,' added he, 'let me examine your wound, and assist you with such little comfort as I can.'

William at once saw the difference between the soldiers in the king's army, and the people in the great family; the latter commonly withdrew their kindness in sickness and trouble, when most wanted, which was just the very time when the others came forward to assist. He told the officer his little history, the manner of his living in the great family, the trifling cause of his quarrelling with it, the slight ground of his entering into the king's service. 'Sir,' said he, 'I quarrelled with the family and I thought I was at once fit for the army: I did not know the qualifications it required. I had not reckoned on discipline, and hardships, and self-denial. I liked well enough to sing a loyal song, or drink the king's health, but I find I do not relish working and fighting for him, though I rashly promised even to lay down my life for his service if called upon, when I took the bounty money and the oath of allegiance. In short, sir, I find that I long for the ease and sloth, the merriment and the feasting of my old

service; I find I cannot be a soldier, and, to speak truth, I was in the very act of deserting when I was stopped short by the cannon ball. So that I feel the guilt of desertion, and the misery of having lost my leg into the bargain.'

The officer thus replied: 'your state is that of every worldly irreligious man. The great family you served is a just picture of the world. The wages the world promises to those who are willing to do its work are high, but the payment is attended with much disappointment; nay, the world, like your great family, is in itself insolvent, and in its very nature incapable of making good the promises, and of paying the high rewards which it holds out to tempt its credulous followers. The ungodly world, like your family, cares little for church, and still less for prayer; and considers the Bible rather as an instrument to make an oath binding, in order to keep the vulgar in obedience, than in containing in itself a perfect rule of faith and practice, and as a title deed to heaven. The generality of men love the world as you did your service, while it smiles upon them, and gives them easy work and plenty of meat and drink; but as soon as it begins to cross and contradict them, they get out of humour with it, just as you did with your service. They then think its drudgery hard, its rewards low. They find out that it is high in its expectations from them, and slack in its payments to them. And they begin to fancy, (because they do not hear religious people murmur as they do,) that there must be some happiness in religion. The world, which takes no account of their deeper sins, at length brings them into discredit for some act of imprudence, just as your family overlooked your lying and swearing, but threatened to drub you for breaking a china dish. Such is the judgment of the world! it particularly bears with those who only break the laws of God, but severely punishes the smallest negligence by which they themselves are injured. The world sooner pardons the breaking ten commandments of God, than even a china dish of its own.

'After some cross or opposition, worldly men, as I said before, begin to think how much content and cheerfulness they remember to have seen in religious people. They therefore begin to fancy that religion must be an easy and delightful, as well as a good thing. They have heard that, *her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace;* and they persuade themselves, that by this is meant worldly pleasantness and sensual peace. They resolve at length to try it, to turn their back upon the world, to engage in the service of God and turn Christians; just as you resolved to leave your old service, to enter into the service of the king and turn soldier. But as you quitted your place in a passion, so they leave the world in a huff. They do not count the cost. They do not calculate upon the darling sin, the habitual pleasures, the ease and vanities which they undertake by their new engagements to renounce, any more than you counted what indulgences you were going to give up when you quitted the luxuries and idleness of your place to enlist in the soldier's warfare. They have, as I said, seen Christians cheerful, and they mistook the ground of their cheerfulness; they fancied it arose, not because through grace they had conquered difficulties, but because they had no difficulties in their passage. They fancied that religion found the road smooth, whereas it only helps to bear with a rough road without complaint. They do not know that these Christians are of good cheer, not because the world is free from tribulation, but because Christ, their captain, has *overcome the world.* But the irreligous man, who has only seen the outside of a Christian in his worldly intercourse, knows little of his secret conflicts, his trials, his self-denials, his warefare with the world without; and with his own corrupt desires within.

'The irreligious man quarrels with the world on some such occasion as you did with your place. He now puts on the outward forms and ceremonies of religion, and assumes the badge of Christianity, just as you were struck with the show of a field day; just as you were pleased with the music and the marching, and put on the cockade and red coat. All seems smooth for a little while. He goes through the outward exercises of a Christian, a degree of credit attends his new profession, but he never suspects there is either difficulty or discipline attending it; he fancies religion is a thing for talking about, and not a thing of the heart and the life. He never suspects that all the psalm-singing he joins in, and the sermons he hears, and the other means he is using, are only as the exercises and the evolutions of the soldiers, to fit and prepare him for actual service; and that these means are no more religion itself, than the exercises and evolutions of your parade were real warfare.

'At length some trial arises: this nominal Christian is called to differ from the world in some great point; something happens which may strike at his comfort, or his credit, or security. This cools his zeal for religion, just as the view of an engagement cooled your courage as a soldier. He finds he was only *angry* with the world, he was not *tired* of it. He was out of humour with the world, not because he had seen through its vanity and emptiness, but because the world was out of humour with him. He finds that it is an easy thing to be a fair-weather Christian, bold where there is nothing to be done, and confident where there is nothing to be feared. Difficulties unmask him to others; temptations unmask him to himself; he discovers, that though he is a high professor, he is no Christian; just as you found out that your red coat and your cockade, your shoulder-knot, and your musket, did not prevent you from being a coward.

'Your misery in the military life, like that of the nominal Christian, arose from your love of ease, your cowardice, and your self ignorance. You rushed into a new way of life, without trying after one qualification for it. A total change of heart and temper were necessary for your new calling. With new views and principles the soldier's life would have been not only easy, but delightful to you. But while with a new profession you retained your old nature it is no wonder if all discipline seemed intolerable to you.

'The true Christian, like the brave soldier, is supported under dangers by a strong faith that the fruits of that victory for which he fights will be safety and peace. But, alas! the pleasures of this world are present and visible; the rewards for which he strives are remote. He therefore fails, because nothing short of a lively faith can ever outweigh a strong present temptation, and lead a man to prefer the joys of conquest to the pleasures of indulgence.

BETTY BROWN,

THE ST. GILES'S ORANGE GIRL:

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF MRS. SPONGE, THE MONEY-LENDER.

Betty Brown the orange girl, was born nobody knows where, and bred nobody knows how. No girl in all the streets of London could drive a barrow more nimbly, avoid pushing against passengers more dexterously, or cry her 'fine China oranges' in a shriller voice. But then she could neither sew, nor spin, nor knit, nor wash, nor iron, nor read, nor spell. Betty had not been always in so good a situation as that in which we now describe her. She came into the world before so many good gentlemen and ladies began to concern themselves so kindly that the poor might have a little learning. There was no charitable society then as there is now, to pick up poor friendless children in the streets,* and put them into a good house, and give them meat, and drink, and lodging, and learning, and teach them to get their bread in an honest way, into the bargain. Whereas, this now is often the case in London; blessed be God who *has ordered the bounds of our habitation*, and cast our lot in such a country!

The longest thing that Betty can remember is, that she used to crawl up out of a night cellar, stroll about the streets, and pick cinders from the scavengers' carts. Among the ashes she sometimes found some ragged gauze and dirty ribands; with these she used to dizen herself out, and join the merry bands on the first of May. This was not, however, quite fair, as she did not lawfully belong either to the female dancers, who foot it gayly round the garland, or to the sooty tribe, who, on this happy holyday, forget their year's toil in Portman square, cheered by the tender bounty of her whose wit has long enlivened the most learned, and whose taste and talents long adorned the most polished societies. Betty, however, often got a few scraps, by appearing to belong to both parties. But as she grew bigger and was not an idle girl, she always put herself in the way of doing something. She would run of errands for the footmen, or sweep the door for the maid of any house where she was known; she would run and fetch some porter and never was once known either to sip a drop by the way, or steal the pot. Her quickness and fidelity in doing little jobs, got her into favour with a lazy cook-maid, who was too apt to give away her master's cold meat and beer, not to those who were most in want, but to those who waited upon her, and did the little things for her which she ought to have done herself.

The cook, who found Betty a dexterous girl, soon employed her to sell ends of candles, pieces of meat and cheese, the lumps of butter, or any thing else she could crib from the house. These were all carried to her friend, Mrs. Sponge, who kept a little shop, and a kind of eating-house for poor working people, not far from the Seven Dials. She also bought as well as sold, many kinds of second-hand things, and was not scrupulous to know whether what she bought was honestly come by, provided she could get it for a sixth part of what it was worth. But if the owner presumed to ask for its real value, then she had sudden qualms of conscience, instantly suspected the things were stolen, and gave herself airs of honesty, which often took in poor silly people, and gave her a sort of half reputation among the needy and ignorant, whose friend she hypocritically pretended to be.

To this artful woman Betty carried the cook's pilferings; and as Mrs. Sponge would give no great price for these in money, the cook was willing to receive payment for her eatables in Mrs. Sponge's drinkables; for she dealt in all kinds of spirits. I shall only just remark here, that one receiver, like Mrs. Sponge, makes many pilferers, who are tempted to commit these petty thieveries, by knowing how easy it is to dispose of them at such iniquitous houses.

Betty was faithful to both her employers, which is extrrordinary, considering the greatness of the temptation and her utter ignorance of good and evil. One day she ventured to ask Mrs. Sponge, if she could not assist her to get into a more settled way of life. She told her that when she rose in the morning she never knew where she should lie at night, nor was she ever sure of a meal beforehand. Mrs. Sponge asked her what she thought herself fit for. Betty, with fear and trembling, said there was one trade for which she thought herself qualified, but she had not the ambition to look so high; it was far above her humble views; this was, to have a barrow. and sell fruit, as several other of Mrs. Sponge's customers did, whom she had often looked up to with envy, little expecting herself ever to attain so independent a station.

Mrs. Sponge was an artful woman. Bad as she was, she was always aiming at something of a character; this was a great help to her trade. While she watched keenly to make every thing turn to her own profit, she had a false fawning way of seeming to do all she did out of pity and kindness to the distressed; and she seldom committed an extortion, but she tried to make the persons she cheated believe themselves highly obliged to her kindness. By thus

* The Philanthropic.

pretending to be their friend, she gained their confidence; and she grew rich herself, while they thought she was only showing favour to them. Various were the arts she had of getting rich; and the money she got by grinding the poor, she spent in the most luxurious living; while she would haggle with her hungry customers for a farthing, she would spend pounds on the most costly delicacies for herself.

Mrs. Sponge, laying aside that haughty look and voice, well known to such as had the misfortune to be in her debt, put on the hypocritical smile and soft canting tone, which she always assumed, when she meant to flatter her superiors, or take in her dependents. 'Betty,' said she, 'I am resolved to stand your friend. These are sad times to be sure. Money is money now. Yet I am resolved to put you in a handsome way of living. You shall have a barrow, and well furnished too.' Betty could not have felt more joy or gratitude, if she had been told that she should have a coach. 'O, madam!' said Betty, 'it is impossible. I have not a penny in the world towards helping me to set up.' 'I will take care of that,' said Mrs. Sponge; 'only you must do as I bid you. You must pay me interest for my money; and you will, of course, be glad also to pay so much every night for a nice hot supper which I get ready *quite out of kindness*, for a number of poor working people. This will be a great comfort for such a friendless girl as you, for my victuals and drink are the best, and my company the merriest of any in all St. Giles's.' Betty thought all this only so many more favours, and curtseying to the ground, said, 'To be sure, ma'am, and thank you a thousand times into the bargain. I never could hope for such a rise in life.'

Mrs. Sponge knew what she was about. Betty was a lively girl, who had a knack at learning any thing; and so well looking through all her dirt and rags, that there was little doubt she would get custom. A barrow was soon provided, and five shillings put into Betty's hands. Mrs. Sponge kindly condescended to go to show her how to buy the fruit; for it was a rule with this prudent gentlewoman, and one from which she never departed, that no one should cheat but herself; and suspecting from her own heart the fraud of all other dealers, she was seldom guilty of the weakness of being imposed upon.

Betty had never possessed such a sum before. She grudged to lay it out all at once, and was ready to fancy she could live upon the capital. The crown, however, was laid out to the best advantage. Betty was carefully taught in what manner to cry her oranges; and received many useful lessons how to get off the bad with the good, and the stale with the fresh. Mrs. Sponge also lent her a few bad sixpences, for which she ordered her to bring home good ones at night. Betty stared. Mrs. Sponge said, 'Betty, those who would get money, must not be too nice about trifles. Keep one of these sixpences in your hand, and if an ignorant young customer gives you a good sixpence, do you immediately slip it into your other hand, and give him the bad one, declaring that it is the very one you have just received, and be ready to swear that you have not another sixpence in the world. You must also learn how to treat different sorts of customers. To some you may put off, with safety, goods which would be quite unsaleable to others. Never offer bad fruit, Betty, to those who know better; never waste the good on those who may be put off with worse: put good oranges at top to attract the eye, and the mouldy ones under for sale.'

Poor Betty had not a nice conscience, for she had never learnt that grand, but simple rule of all moral obligation, *Never do that to another which you would not have another do to you*. She set off with her barrow, as proud and as happy as if she had been set up in the first shop in Covent Garden. Betty had a sort of natural good temper, which made her unwilling to impose, but she had no principle which told her it was a sin to do so. She had such good success, that when night came, she had not an orange left. With a light heart she drove her empty barrow to Mrs. Sponge's door. She went in with a merry face, and threw down on the counter every farthing she had taken. 'Betty,' said Mrs. Sponge, 'I have a right to it all, as it was got by my money. But I am too generous to take it. I will therefore only take sixpence for this day's use of my five shillings. This is a most reasonable interest, and I will lend you the same sum to trade with to-morrow, and so on; you only paying me sixpence for the use of it every night, which will be a great bargain to you. You must also pay me my price every night for your supper, and you shall have an excellent lodging above stairs; so you see every thing will now be provided for you in a genteel manner, through my generosity.'*

Poor Betty's gratitude blinded her so completely, that she had forgot to calculate the vast proportion which this generous benefactress was to receive out of her little gains. She thought herself a happy creature, and went in to supper with a number of others of her own class. For this supper, and for more porter and gin than she ought to have drunk, Betty was forced to pay so high that it ate up all the profits of the day, which, added to the daily interest, made Mrs. Sponge a rich return for her five shillings

Betty was reminded again of the gentility of her new situation, as she crept up to bed in one of Mrs. Sponge's garrets, five stories high. This loft, to be sure, was small and had no window, but what it wanted in light was made up in company, as it had three beds and thrice as many lodgers. Those gentry had one night, in a drunken frolic, broken down the door, which happily had never been replaced; for, since that time, the lodgers had died much seldomer of infectious distempers, than when they were close shut in. For this lodging Betty paid twice as much to her *good friend* as she would have done to a stranger. Thus she continued with great industry and a thriving trade, as poor as on the first day, and not a bit nearer to saving money enough to buy her even a pair of shoes, though her feet were nearly on the ground.

One day, as Betty was driving her barrow through a street near Holborn, a lady from a

* For an authentic account of numberless frauds of this kind, see that very useful work of Mr. Colquhoun on the 'Police of the Metropolis of London.'

window called out to her that she wanted some oranges. While the servant went to fetch a plate, the lady entered into some talk with Betty, having been struck with her honest countenance and civil manner She questioned her as to her way of life, and the profits of her trade; and Betty, who had never been so kindly treated before by so genteel a person, was very communicative. She told her little history as far as she knew it, and dwelt much on the generosity of Mrs. Sponge, in keeping her in her house, and trusting her with so large a capital as five shillings. At first it sounded like a very good-natured thing; but the lady, whose husband was one of the justices of the new police, happened to know more of Mrs. Sponge than was good, which led her to inquire still further. Betty owned, that to be sure it was not all clear profit, for that besides that the high price of the supper and bed ran away with all she got, she paid sixpence a-day for the use of the five shillings.' 'And how long have you done this?' said the lady. 'About a year, madam.'

The lady's eyes were at once opened. 'My poor girl,' said she, 'do you know that you have already paid for that single five shillings the enormous sum of 7*l.* 10*s.*? I believe it is the most profitable five shillings Mrs. Sponge ever laid out.'—'O no, madam,' said the girl, 'that good gentlewoman does the same kindness to ten or twelve other poor friendless creatures like me.'—'Does she so?' said the lady; 'then I never heard of a more lucrative trade than this woman carries on, under the mask of charity, at the expense of her poor deluded fellow creatures.'

'But, madam,' said Betty, who did not comprehend this lady's arithmetic, 'what can I do? I now contrive to pick up a morsel of bread without begging or stealing. • Mrs. Sponge has been very good to me; and I don't see how I can help myself.'

'I will tell you,' said the lady: 'if you will follow my advice, you may not only maintain yourself honestly but independently. Only oblige yourself to live hard for a little time, till you have saved five shillings out of your own earnings. Give up that expensive supper at night, drink only one pint of porter, and no gin at all. As soon as you have scraped together the five shillings, carry it back to your false friend; and if you are industrious, you will, at the end of the year, have saved 7*l.* 10*s.* If you can make a shift to live now, when you have this heavy interest to pay, judge how things will mend when your capital becomes your own. You will put some clothes on your back; and, by leaving the use of spirits, and the company in which you drink them, your health, your morals, and your condition will mend.'

The lady did not talk thus to save her money. She would willingly have given the girl the five shillings; but she thought it was beginning at the wrong end. She wanted to try her. Besides, she knew there was more pleasure, as well as honour, in possessing five shillings of one's own saving, than of another's giving. Betty promised to obey. She owned she had got no good by the company or the liquor at Mrs. Sponge's. She promised that very night to begin saving the expense of the supper: and that she would not taste a drop of gin till she had the five shillings beforehand. The lady, who knew the power of good habits, was contented with this, thinking, that if the girl could abstain for a certain time, it would become easy to her. She therefore, at present, said little about the *sin* of drinking, and only insisted on the *expense* of it.

In a very few weeks Betty had saved up the five shillings. She went to carry back this money with great gratitude to Mrs. Sponge. This kind friend began to abuse her most unmercifully. She called her many hard names, not fit to repeat, for having forsaken the supper, by which she swore she herself got nothing at all; but as she had the charity to dress it for such beggarly wretches, she insisted they should pay for it, whether they eat it or not. She also brought in a heavy score for lodging, though Betty had paid for it every night, and had given notice of her intending to quit her. By all these false pretences, she got from her, not only her own five shillings, but all the little capital with which Betty was going to set up for herself. All was not sufficient to answer her demands—she declared she would send her to prison: but while she went to call a constable, Betty contrived to make off.

With a light pocket and a heavy heart she went back to the lady; and with many tears told her sad story. The lady's husband, the justice, condescended to listen to Betty's tale. He said Mrs. Sponge had long been upon his books as a receiver of stolen goods. Betty's evidence strengthened his bad opinion of her. 'This petty system of usury,' said the magistrate, 'may be thought trifling; but it will no longer appear so, when you reflect, that if one of these female sharpers possesses a capital of seventy shillings, or 3*l.* 10*s.* with fourteen steady regular customers, she can realize a fixed income of one hundred guineas a year. Add to this the influence such a loan gives her over these friendless creatures, by compelling them to eat at her house, or lodge, or buy liquors, or by taking their pawns, and you will see the extent of the evil. I pity these poor victims: you, Betty, shall point out some of them to me, I will endeavour to open their eyes on their own bad management. It is not by giving to the importunate shillings and half crowns, and turning them adrift to wait for the next accidental relief, that much good is done. It saves trouble, indeed, but that trouble being the most valuable part of charity, ought not to be spared; at least by those who have leisure as well as affluence. It is one of the greatest acts of kindness to the poor to mend their economy, and to give them right views of laying out their little money to advantage. These poor blinded creatures look no farther than to be able to pay this heavy interest every night, and to obtain the same loan on the same hard terms the next day. Thus they are kept in poverty and bondage all their lives; but I hope as many as hear of this will go on a better plan, and I shall be ready to help any who are willing to help themselves.' This worthy magistrate went directly to Mrs. Sponge's with proper officers; and he soon got to the bot-

tom of many iniquities. He not only made her refund poor Betty's money, but committed her to prison for receiving stolen goods, and various other offences, which may, perhaps, make the subject of another history.

Betty was now set up in trade to her heart's content. She had found the benefit of leaving off spirits, and she resolved to drink them no more. The first fruits of this resolution was, that in a fortnight she bought her a pair of new shoes; and as there was now no deduction for interest, or for gin, her earnings became considerable. The lady made her a present of a gown and a hat, on the easy condition that she should go to church. She accepted the terms, at first rather as an act of obedience to the lady than from a sense of higher duty. But she soon began to go from a better motive. This constant attendance at church, joined to the instructions of the lady, opened a new world to Betty. She now heard, for the first time, that she was a sinner; that God had given a law which was holy, just, and good; that she had broken this law, had been a swearer, a Sabbath-breaker, and had lived *without God in the world.* All this was sad news to Betty; she knew, indeed, before, that there were sinners, but she thought they were only to be found in the prisons, or at Botany Bay, or in those mournful carts which she had sometimes followed with her barrow, with the unthinking crowd, to Tyburn.—She was deeply struck with the great truths revealed in the Scripture, which were quite new to her; her heart smote her, and she became anxious *to flee from the wrath to come.* She was desirous of improvement, and said, 'she would give up all the profits of her barrow, and go into the hardest service, rather than live in sin and ignorance.'

'Betty,' said the lady, 'I am glad to see you so well disposed, and will do what I can for you. Your present way of life, to be sure, exposes you to much danger; but the trade is not unlawful in itself, and we may please God in any calling, provided it be not a dishonest one. In this great town there must be barrow-women to sell fruit. Do you, then, instead of forsaking your business, set a good example to those in it, and show them, that though a dangerous trade, it need not be a wicked one. Till Providence points out some safer way of getting your bread, let your companions see, that it is possible to be good even in this. Your trade being carried on in the open street, and your fruit bought in an open shop, you are not so much obliged to keep sinful company as may be thought. Take a garret in an honest house, to which you may go home in safety at night. I will give you a bed, and a few necessaries to furnish your room; and I will also give you a constant Sunday's dinner. A barrow-woman, blessed be God and our good laws, is as much her own mistress on Sundays as a duchess; and the church and the Bible are as much open to her. You may soon learn as much of religion as you are expected to know. A barrow-woman may pray as heartily morning and night, and serve God as acceptably all day, while she is carrying on her little trade, as if she had her whole time to spare.'

'To do this well, you must mind the following

'*Rules for Retail Dealers.*

'Resist every temptation to cheat.
'Never impose bad goods on false pretences.
'Never put off bad money for good.
'Never use profane or uncivil language.

'Never swear your goods cost so much, when you know it is false. By so doing you are guilty of two sins in one breath, a lie and an oath.

'To break these rules will be your chief temptation. God will mark how you behave under them, and will reward or punish you accordingly. These temptations will be as great to you, as higher trials are to higher people; but you have the same God to look to for strength to resist them as they have.—You must pray to him to give you this strength. You shall attend a Sunday-school, where you will be taught these good things; and I will promote you as you shall be found to deserve.'

Poor Betty here burst into tears of joy and gratitude, crying out, 'What! shall such a poor friendless creature as I be treated so kindly, and learn to read the word of God too? Oh, madam, what a lucky chance brought me to your door!' —'Betty,' said the lady, 'what you have just said shows the need you have of being better taught; there is no such thing as chance; and we offend God when we call that luck or chance which is brought about by his will and pleasure. —None of the events of your life have happened by chance; but all have been under the direction of a good and kind Providence.—He has permitted you to experience want and distress, that you might acknowledge His hand in your present comfort and prosperity. Above all, you must bless his goodness in sending you to me, not only because I have been of use to you in your worldly affairs, but because he has enabled me to show you the danger of your state from sin and ignorance, and to put you in a way to know his will and to keep his commandments, which is eternal life.

How Betty, by industry and piety, rose in the world, till at length she came to keep that handsome sausage shop near the Seven Dials, and was married to that very hackney-coachman, whose history and honest character may be learned from that ballad of the Cheap Repository which bears his name, may be shown hereafter

BLACK GILES THE POACHER:

CONTAINING SOME ACCOUNT OF A FAMILY WHO HAD RATHER LIVE BY THEIR WITS THAN THEIR WORK.

PART I.

Poaching Giles lives on the borders of those great moors in Somersetshire. Giles, to be sure, has been a sad fellow in his time; and it is none of his fault if his whole family do not end their career, either at the gallows or Botany Bay. He lives at that mud cottage with the broken windows, stuffed with dirty rags, just beyond the gate which divides the upper from the lower moor. You may know the house at a good distance by the ragged tiles on the roof, and the loose stones which are ready to drop out from the chimney; though a short ladder, a hod of mortar, and half an hour's leisure time, would have prevented all this, and made the little dwelling tight enough. But as Giles had never learnt any thing that was good, so he did not know the value of such useful sayings, as, that 'a tile in time saves nine.'

Besides this, Giles fell into that common mistake, that a beggarly looking cottage, and filthy ragged children, raised most compassion, and of course drew most charity. But as cunning as he was in other things, he was out in his reckoning here; for it is neatness, housewifery, and a decent appearance, which draw the kindness of the rich and charitable, while they turn away disgusted from filth and laziness; not out of pride, but because they see that it is next to impossible to mend the condition of those who degrade themselves by dirt and sloth; and few people care to help those who will not help themselves.

The common on which Giles's hovel stands, is quite a deep marsh in a wet winter: but in summer it looks green and pretty enough. To be sure it would be rather convenient when one passes that way in a carriage, if one of the children would run out and open the gate: but instead of any one of them running out as soon as they heard the wheels, which would be quite time enough, what does Giles do, but set all his ragged brats, with dirty faces, matted locks, and naked feet and legs, to lie all day upon a sand bank hard by the gate, waiting for the slender chance of what may be picked up from travellers. At the sound of a carriage, a whole covey of these little scare-crows start up, rush to the gate, and all at once thrust out their hats and aprons; and for fear this, together with the noise of their clamorous begging, should not sufficiently frighten the horses, they are very apt to let the gate slap full against you, before you are half way through, in their eager scuffle to snatch from each other the halfpence which you have thrown out to them. I know two ladies who were one day very near being killed by these abominable tricks.

Thus five or six little idle creatures, who might be earning a trifle by knitting at home, who might be useful to the public by working in the field, and who might assist their families by learning to get their bread twenty honest ways, are suffered to lie about all day, in the hope of a few chance halfpence, which after all, they are by no means sure of getting. Indeed, when the neighbouring gentlemen found out that opening the gate was a family trade, they soon left off giving any thing. And I myself, though I used to take out a penny ready to give, had there been only one to receive it, when I see a whole family established in so beggarly a trade, quietly put it back again in my pocket, and give nothing at all. And so few travellers pass that way, that sometimes after the whole family have lost a day, their gains do not amount to two-pence.

As Giles had a far greater taste for living by his wits than his work, he was at one time in hopes that his children might have got a pretty penny by *tumbling* for the diversion of travellers, and he set about training them in that indecent practice; but unluckily the moors being level, the carriage travelled faster than the children tumbled. He envied those parents who lived on the London road, over the Wiltshire downs, which downs being very hilly, it enables the tumbler to keep pace with the traveller, till he sometimes extorts from the light and unthinking, a reward instead of a reproof. I beg leave, however, to put all gentlemen and ladies in mind, that such tricks are a kind of apprenticeship to the trades of begging and thieving; and that nothing is more injurious to good morals than, to encourage the poor in any habits which may lead them to live upon chance.

Giles, to be sure, as his children grew older, began to train them to such other employments, as the idle habits they had learned at the gate very properly qualified them for. The right of common, which some of the poor cottagers have in that part of the country, and which is doubtless a considerable advantage to many, was converted by Giles, into the means of corrupting his whole family; for his children, as soon as they grew too big for the trade of begging at the gate, were promoted to the dignity of thieves on the moor. Here he kept two or three asses, miserable beings, which if they had the good fortune to escape an untimely death by starving, did not fail to meet with it by beating. Some of the biggest boys were sent out with these lean and galled animals to carry sand or coals about the neighbouring towns. Both sand and coals were often stolen before they got them to sell; or if not, they always took care to cheat in selling them. By long practice in this art, they grew so dexterous, that they could give a pretty good guess how large a coal they could crib out of every bag before the buyer would be likely to miss it.

All their odd time was taken up under the pretence of watching their asses on the moor, or running after five or six half-starved geese: but the truth is these boys were only watching

for an opportunity to steal an odd goose of their neighbour's, while they pretended to look after their own. They used also to pluck the quills or the down from these poor live creatures, or half milk a cow before the farmer's maid came with her pail. They all knew how to calculate to a minute what time to be down in a morning to let out their lank hungry beasts, which they had turned over night into the farmer's field to steal a little good pasture. They contrived to get there just time enough to escape being caught replacing the stakes they had pulled out for the cattle to get over. For Giles was a prudent long-headed fellow; and whenever he stole food for his colts, took care never to steal stakes from the hedges at the same place. He had sense enough to know that the gain did not make up for the danger; he knew that a loose faggot, pulled from a neighbour's pile of wood after the family were gone to bed, answered the end better, and was not half the trouble.

Among the many trades which Giles professed, he sometimes practised that of a rat-catcher; but he was addicted to so many tricks, that he never followed the same trade long; for detection will, sooner or later, follow the best concerted villany. Whenever he was sent for to a farm house, his custom was to kill a few of the old rats, always taking care to leave a little stock of young ones alive, sufficient to keep up the breed; 'for,' said he, 'if I were to be such a fool as to clear a house or a barn at once, how would my trade be carried on?' And where any barn was over-stocked, he used to borrow a few rats from thence, just to people a neighbouring granary which had none; and he might have gone on till now, had he not unluckily been caught one evening emptying his cage of rats under parson Wilson's barn door.

This worthy minister, Mr. Wilson, used to pity the neglected children of Giles, as much as he blamed the wicked parents. He one day picked up Dick, who was far the best of Gile's bad boys. Dick was loitering about in a field behind the parson's garden in search of a hen's nest, his mother having ordered him to bring home a few eggs that night, by hook or by crook, as Giles was resolved to have some pancakes for supper, though he knew that eggs were a penny a-piece. Mr. Wilson had long been desirous of snatching some of this vagrant family from ruin; and his chief hopes were bent on Dick, as the least hackneyed in knavery. He had once given him a new pair of shoes, on his promising to go to school next Sunday; but no sooner had Rachel, the boy's mother, got the shoes into her clutches, than she pawned them for a bottle of gin; and ordered the boy to keep out of the parson's sight, and to be sure to play his marbles on Sunday for the future, at the other end of the parish, and not near the church-yard. Mr. Wilson, however, picked up the boy once more, for it was not his way to despair of any body. Dick was just going to take to his heels, as usua', for fear the old story of the shoes should be brought forward; but finding he could not get off, what does he do but run into a little puddle of muddy water which lay between him and the parson, that the sight of his naked feet might not bring on the dreaded subject. Now it happened that Mr. Wilson was planting a little field of beans, so he thought this a good opportunity to employ Dick, and he told him he had got some pretty easy work for him. Dick did as he was bid; he willingly went to work, and readily began to plant his beans with despatch and regularity according to the directions given him.

While the boy was busily at work by himself, Giles happened to come by, having been skulking round the back way to look over the parson's garden wall, to see if there was any thing worth climbing over for on the ensuing night. He spied Dick, and began to scold him for working for the stingy old parson, for Giles had a natural antipathy to whatever belonged to the church. 'What has he promised thee a-day?' said he; 'little enough I dare say.' 'He is not to pay me by the day,' said Dick, 'but says he will give me so much when I have planted this peck, and so much for the next.' 'Oh, oh! that alters the case,' said Giles. 'One may, indeed, get a trifle by this sort of work. I hate your regular day-jobs, where one can't well avoid doing one's work for one's money. Come, give me a handful of beans, I will teach thee how to plant when thou art paid for planting by the peck. All we have to do in that case is to despatch the work as fast as we can, and get rid of the beans with all speed; and as to the seed coming up or not, that is no business of our's; we are paid for planting not for growing. At the rate thou goest on thou would'st not get sixpence to-night. Come along, bury away.' So saying he took his hatful of the seed, and where Dick had been ordered to set one bean, Giles buried a dozen; of course the beans were soon out. But though the peck was emptied, the ground was unplanted. But cunning Giles knew this could not be found out till the time when the beans might be expected to come up, 'and then Dick,' says he, 'the snails and the mice may go shares in the blame, or we can lay the fault on the rooks or the blackbirds.' So saying he sent the boy into the parsonage to receive his pay, taking care to secure about a quarter of the peck of beans for his own colt. He put both bag and beans into his own pocket to carry home, bidding Dick tell Mr. Wilson that he had planted the beans and lost the bag.

In the meantime Giles's other boys were busy in emptying the ponds and trout-streams in the the neighbouring manor. They would steal away the carp and tench when they were no bigger than gudgeons. By this untimely depredation they plundered the owner of his property, without enriching themselves. But the pleasure of mischief was reward enough. These, and a hundred other little thieveries, they committed with such dexterity, that old Tim Crib, whose son was transported last assizes for sheep stealing, used to be often reproaching his boys that Giles's sons were worth a hundred of such blockheads, as he had; for scarce a night passed but Giles had some little comfortable thing for supper which his boys had pilfered in the day, while his undutiful dogs never stole any thing worth having. Giles, in the meantime, was busy in his way, but as busy as he was

in laying his nets, starting coveys, and training dogs, he always took care that his depredations should not be confined merely to game.

Gile's boys had never seen the inside of a church since they were christened, and the father thought he knew his own interest better than to force them to it; for church-time was the season of their harvest. Then the hen's nests were searched, a stray duck was clapped under the smock frock, the tools which might have been left by chance in a farm-yard were picked up, and all the neighbouring pigeon-houses were thinned, so that Giles used to boast to tawny Rachel his wife, that Sunday was to them the most profitable day in the week. With her it was certainly the most laborious day, as she always did her washing and ironing on the Sunday morning, it being, as she said, the only leisure day she had, for on the other days she went about the country telling fortunes, and selling dream-books and wicked songs. Neither her husband's nor her children's clothes were ever mended, and if Sunday, her idle day, had not come about once in every week, it is likely they would never have been washed neither. You might however see her as you were going to church smoothing her own rags on her best red cloak, which she always used for her ironing-cloth on Sundays, for her cloak when she travelled, and for her blanket at night; such a wretched manager was Rachel! Among her other articles of trade, one was to make and sell pepper-mint, and other distilled waters. These she had the cheap art of making without trouble and without expense, for she made them without herbs and without a still. Her way was, to fill so many quart bottles with plain water, putting a spoonful of mint water in the mouth of each; these she corked down with rosin, carrying to each customer a phial of real distilled water to taste by way of sample. This was so good that her bottles were commonly bought up without being opened; but if any suspicion arose, and she was forced to uncork a bottle, by the few drops of distilled water lying at top, she even then escaped detection, and took care to get out of reach before the bottle was opened a second time. She was too prudent ever to go twice to the same house.

The upright Magistrate.

There is hardly any petty mischief that is not connected with the life of a poacher. Mr. Wilson was aware of this; he was not only a pious clergyman, but an upright justice. He used to say, that people who were truly conscientious, must be so in small things as well as in great ones, or they would destroy the effect of their own precepts, and their example would not be of general use. For this reason he never would accept of a hare or a partridge from any unqualified person in the parish: He did not content himself with shuffling the thing off by asking questions, and pretending to take it for granted in a general way that the game was fairly come at; but he used to say, that by receiving the booty he connived at a crime, made himself a sharer in it; and if he gave a present to the man who brought it, he even tempted him to repeat the fault.

One day poor Jack Weston, an honest fellow in the neighbourhood, whom Mr. Wilson had kindly visited and relieved in a long sickness, from which he was but just recovered, was brought before him as he was sitting on the justice's bench; Jack was accused of having knocked down a hare; and of all the birds in the air who should the informer be but black Giles the poacher? Mr. Wilson was grieved at the charge; he had a great regard for Jack, but he had still a greater regard for the law. The poor fellow pleaded guilty. He did not deny the fact, but said he did not consider it as a crime, for he did not think game was private property, and he owned he had a strong temptation for doing what he had done, which he hoped would plead his excuse. The justice desired to know what this temptation was.—'Sir,' said the poor fellow, 'you know I was given over this spring in a bad fever. I had no friend in the world but you, sir. Under God you saved my life by your charitable relief; and I trust also you may have helped to save my soul by your prayers and your good advice; for, by the grace of God, I have turned over a new leaf since that sickness.

'I know I can never make you amends for all your goodness, but I thought it would be some comfort to my full heart if I could but once give you some little token of my gratitude. So I had trained a pair of nice turtle doves for madam Wilson, but they were stolen from me, sir, and I do suspect black Giles stole them. Yesterday morning, sir, as I was crawling out to my work, for I am still but very weak, a fine hare ran across my path. I did not stay to consider whether it was wrong to kill a hare, but I felt it was right to show my gratitude; so, sir, without a moment's thought I did knock down the hare, which I was going to carry to your worship, because I knew madam was fond of hare. I am truly sorry for my fault, and will submit to whatever punishment your worship may please to inflict.'

Mr. Wilson was much moved with this honest confession, and touched with the poor fellow's gratitude. What added to the effect of the story, was the weak condition and pale sickly looks of the offender. But this worthy magistrate never suffered his feeling to bias his integrity; he knew that he did not sit on that bench to indulge pity, but to administer justice; and while he was sorry for the offender, he would never justify the offence. 'John,' said he, 'I am surprised that you could for a moment forget that I never accept any gift which causes the giver to break a law. On Sunday I teach you from the pulpit the laws of God, whose minister I am. At present I fill the chair of the magistrate, to enforce and execute the laws of the land. Between those and the others there is more connexion than you are aware. I thank you, John, for your affection to me, and I admire your gratitude; but I must not allow either affection or gratitude to be brought as a plea for a wrong action. It is not your business nor mine, John, to settle whether the game laws are good or bad. Till they are repealed we must obey them. Many, I doubt not, break these laws through ignorance, and many, I am certain, who would not dare to steal a goose or a turkey,

make no scruple of knocking down a hare or a partridge. You will hereafter think yourself happy that this your first attempt has proved unsuccessful, as I trust you are too honest a fellow ever to intend to turn poacher. With poaching much moral evil is connected; a habit of nightly depredation; a custom of prowling in the dark for prey produces in time a disrelish for honest labour. He whose first offence was committed without much thought or evil intention, if he happens to succeed a few times in carrying off his booty undiscovered, grows bolder and bolder: and when he fancies there is no shame attending it, he very soon gets to persuade himself that there is also no sin. While some people pretend a scruple about stealing a sheep, they partly live by plundering of warrens. But remember that the warrener pays a high rent, and that therefore his rabbits are as much his property as his sheep. Do not then deceive yourselves with these false distinctions. All property is sacred, and as the laws of the land are intended to fence in that property, he who brings up his children to break down any of these fences, brings them up to certain sin and ruin. He who begins with robbing orchards, rabbit-warrens, and fish-ponds, will probably end with horse-stealing or high-way robbery. Poaching is a regular apprenticeship to bolder crimes. He whom I may commit as a boy to sit in the stocks for killing a partridge, may be likely to end at the gallows for killing a man.

'Observe, you who now hear me, the strictness and impartiality of justice. I know Giles to be a worthless fellow, yet it is my duty to take his information; I know Jack Weston to be an honest youth, yet I must be obliged to make him pay the penalty. Giles is a bad man, but he can prove this fact; Jack is a worthy lad, but he has committed this fault. I am sorry for you, Jack; but do not let it grieve you that Giles has played worse tricks a hundred times, and yet got off, while you were detected in the very first offence, for that would be grieving because you are not as great a rogue as Giles. At this moment you think your good luck is very unequal; but all this will one day turn out in your favour. Giles is not the more a favourite of Heaven because he has hitherto escaped Botany Bay, or the hulks; nor is it any mark of God's displeasure against you, John, that you were found out in your very first attempt.'

Here the good justice left off speaking, and no one could contradict the truth of what he had said. Weston humbly submitted to his sentence, but he was very poor, and knew not where to raise the money to pay his fine. His character had always been so fair, that several farmers present kindly agreed to advance a trifle each to prevent his being sent to prison, and he thankfully promised to work out the debt. The justice himself, though he could not soften the law, yet showed Weston so much kindness that he was enabled before the year was out, to get out of this difficulty. He began to think more seriously than he had ever yet done, and grew to abhor poaching, not merely from fear, but from principle.

We shall soon see whether poaching Giles always got off so successfully. Here we have seen that worldly prosperity is no sure sign of goodness. Next month we may, perhaps, see that the 'triumph of the wicked is short;' for I then promise to give the second part of the Poacher, together with the entertaining story of the Widow Brown's Apple-tree.

PART II.

History of Widow Brown's Apple-tree.

I think my readers got so well acquainted last month with black Giles the poacher, that they will not expect this month to hear any great good, either of Giles himself, his wife Rachel, or any of their family. I am sorry to expose their tricks, but it is their fault, not mine. If I pretend to speak about people at all, I must tell the truth. I am sure, if folks would but turn about and mend, it would be a thousand times pleasanter to me to write their histories; for it is no comfort to tell of any body's faults. If the world would but grow good, I should be glad enough to publish it; but till it really becomes so, I must go on describing it as it is; otherwise, I should only mislead my readers, instead of instructing them. It is the duty of a faithful historian to relate the evil with the good.

As to Giles and his boys, I am sure old widow Brown has good reason to remember their dexterity. Poor woman! she had a fine little bed of onions in her neat and well-kept garden; she was very fond of her onions, and many a rheumatism has she caught by kneeling down to weed them in a damp day, notwithstanding the little flannel cloak and the bit of an old mat which madam Wilson gave her, because the old woman would needs weed in wet weather. Her onions she always carefully treasured up for her winter's store; for an onion makes a little broth very relishing, and is indeed the only savoury thing poor people are used to get. She had also a small orchard, containing about a dozen apple-trees, with which in a good year she had been known to make a couple of barrels of cider, which she sold to her landlord towards paying her rent, besides having a little keg which she was able to keep back for her own drinking. Well! would you believe it, Giles and his boys marked both onions and apples for their own; indeed, a man who stole so many rabbits from the warrener, was likely enough to steal onions for sauce. One day, when the widow was abroad on a little business, Giles and his boys made a clear riddance of the onion bed; and when they had pulled up every single onion, they then turned a couple of pigs into the garden, who, allured by the smell, tore up the bed in such a manner, that the widow, when she came home, had not the least doubt but the pigs had been the thieves. To confirm this opinion, they took care to leave the latch half open at one end of the garden, and to break down a slight fence at the other end.

I wonder how any body can find in his heart not to pity and respect poor old widows. There is something so forlorn and helpless in their condition, that methinks it is a call on every body, men, women, and children, to do them all

the kind services that fall in their way. Surely their having no one to take their part, is an additional reason for kind-hearted people not to hurt and oppress them. But it was this very reason which led Giles to do this woman an injury. With what a touching simplicity is it recorded in Scripture, of the youth whom our blessed Saviour raised from the dead, that he was the only son of his mother, *and she a widow!*

It happened unluckily for poor widow Brown that her cottage stood quite alone. On several mornings together, (for roguery gets up much earlier than industry,) Giles and his boys stole regularly into her orchard, followed by their jack-asses. She was so deaf that she could not hear the asses if they had brayed ever so loud, and to this Giles trusted; for he was very cautious in his rogueries; since he could not otherwise have contrived so long to keep out of prison; for though he was almost always suspected, he had seldom been taken up, and never convicted. The boys used to fill their bags, load their asses, and then march off; and if in their way to the town where the apples were to be sold they chanced to pass by one of their neighbours who might be likely to suspect them, they then all at once began to scream out, 'Buy my coal!—buy my sand!'

Besides the trees in her orchard, poor widow Brown had in her small garden, one apple-tree particularly fine; it was a red-streak, so tempting and so lovely, that Giles's family had watched it with longing eyes, till at last they resolved on a plan for carrying off all this fine fruit in their bags. But it was a nice point to manage. The tree stood directly under her chamber window, so that there was some danger that she might spy them at the work. They therefore determined to wait till the next Sunday morning when they knew she would not fail to be at church. Sunday came, and during service Giles attended. It was a lone house, as I said before, and the rest of the parish were safe at church. In a trice the tree was cleared, the bags were filled, the asses were whipped, the thieves were off, the coast was clear, and all was safe and quiet by the time the sermon was over.

Unluckily, however, it happened, that this tree was so beautiful, and the fruit so fine, that the people, as they used to pass to and from the church, were very apt to stop and admire widow Brown's red-streaks: and some of the farmers rather envied her that in that scarce season, when they hardly expected to make a pye out of a large orchard, she was likely to make a cask of cider from a single tree. I am afraid, indeed, if I must speak out, she herself rather set her heart too much upon this fruit, and had felt as much pride in her tree as gratitude to a good Providence for it; but this failing of hers was no excuse for Giles. The covetousness of this thief had for once got the better of his caution; the tree was too completely stripped, though the youngest boy Dick did beg hard that his father would leave the poor old woman enough for a few dumplings; and when Giles ordered Dick in his turn to shake the tree, the boy did it so gently that hardly any apples fell, for which he got a good stroke of the stick with which the old man was beating down the apples.

The neighbours on their return from church stopped as usual, but it was not, alas! to admire the apples, for apples there were none left, but to lament the robbery, and console the widow; meantime the red-streaks were safely lodged in Giles's hovel under a few bundles of new hay which he had contrived to pull from the farmer's mow the night before, for the use of his jackasses. Such a stir, however, began to be made about the widow's apple-tree, that Giles, who knew how much his character had laid him open to suspicion, as soon as he saw the people safe in church again in the afternoon, ordered his boys to carry each a hatful of the apples and thrust them in a little casement window which happened to be open in the house of Samuel Price, a very honest carpenter in that parish. who was at church with his whole family. Giles's plan, by this contrivance, was to lay the theft on Price's sons in case the thing should come to be further inquired into. Here Dick put in a word, and begged and prayed his father not to force them to carry the apples to Price's. But all that he got by his begging was such a knock as had nearly laid him on the earth. 'What, you cowardly rascal,' said Giles, 'you will go and *'peach*, I suppose, and get your father sent to gaol.'

Poor widow Brown, though her trouble had made her still weaker than she was, went to church again in the afternoon: indeed she rightly thought that her being in trouble was a new reason why she ought to go. During the service she tried with all her might not to think of her red-streaks, and whenever they would come into her head, she took up her prayer-book directly, and so she forgot them a little; and indeed she found herself much easier when she came out of the church than when she went in; an effect so commonly produced by prayer, that methinks it is a pity people do not try it oftener. Now it happened oddly enough, that on that Sunday, of all the Sundays in the year, the widow should call in to rest a little at Samuel Price's, to tell over again the lamentable story of the apples, and to consult with him how the thief might be brought to justice. But O, reader! guess if you can, for I am sure I cannot tell you, what was her surprise, when, on going into Samuel Price's kitchen, she saw her own red streaks lying on the window! The apples were of a sort too remarkable, for colour, shape, and size, to be mistaken. There was not such another tree in the parish. Widow Brown immediately screamed out, 'Alas-a-day! as sure as can be, here are my red-streakes; I could swear to them in any court.' Samuel Price, who believed his sons to be as honest as himself, was shocked and troubled at the sight. He knew he had no red-streaks of his own, he knew there were no apples in the window when he went to church: he did verily believe these apples to be the widow's. But how they came there he could not possibly guess. He called for Tom, the only one of his sons who now lived at home. Tom was at the Sunday-school, which he had never once missed since Mr. Wilson the minister had set up one in the parish. Was such a boy likely to do such a deed!

A crowd was by this time got about Price's

door, among which were Giles and his boys, who had already taken care to spread the news that Tom Price was the thief. Most people were unwilling to believe it. His character was very good, but appearances were strongly against him. Mr. Wilson, who had staid to christen a child, now came in. He was much concerned that Tom Price, the best boy in his school, should stand accused of such a crime. He sent for the boy, examined, and cross-examined him.—No marks of guilt appeared. But still though he pleaded *not guilty*, there lay the red-streaks in his father's window. All the idle fellows in the place, who were most likely to have committed such a theft themselves, were the very people who fell with vengeance on poor Tom. The wicked seldom give any quarter. 'This is one of your sanctified ones !' cried they. 'This was all the good that Sunday-schools did ! For their parts they never saw any good come by religion. Sunday was the only day for a little pastime, and if poor boys must be shut up with their godly books, when they ought to be out taking a little pleasure, it was no wonder they made themselves amends by such tricks.' Another said he should like to see parson Wilson's righteous one well whipped. A third hoped he would be clapped in the stocks for a young hypocrite as he was ; while old Giles, who thought the only way to avoid suspicion was by being more violent than the rest, declared, 'that he hoped the young dog would be transported for life.'

Mr. Wilson was too wise and too just to proceed against Tom without full proof.—He declared the crime was a very heavy one, and he feared that heavy must be the punishment. Tom, who knew his own innocence, earnestly prayed to God that it might be made to appear as clear as the noon-day ; and very fervent were his secret devotions on that night.

Black Giles passed his night in a very different manner. He set off as soon as it was dark, with his sons and their jack-asses, laden with their stolen goods. As such a cry was raised about the apples, he did not think it safe to keep them longer at home, but resolved to go and sell them at the next town ; borrowing without leave a lame colt out of the moor to assist in carrying off his booty.

Giles and his eldest sons had rare sport all the way in thinking, that while they were enjoying the profit of their plunder, Tom Price would be whipt round the market place at least, if not sent beyond sea. But the younger boy Dick, who had naturally a tender heart, though hardened by his long familiarity with sin, could not help crying, when he thought that Tom Price might, perhaps, be transported for a crime which he himself had helped to commit. He had had no compunction about the robbery, for he had not been instructed in the great principles of truth and justice ; nor would he therefore, perhaps, have had much remorse about accusing an innocent boy. But though utterly devoid of principle, he had some remains of natural feeling and of gratitude. Tom Price had often given him a bit of his own bread and cheese ; and once, when Dick was like to be drowned, Tom had jumped into the pond with his clothes on, and saved his life when he was just sinking ; the remembrance of all this made his heart heavy. He said nothing ; but as he trotted barefoot after the asses, he heard his father and brothers laugh at having outwitted the godly ones ; and he grieved to think how poor Tom would suffer for his wickedness, yet fear kept him silent ; they called him a sulky dog, and lashed the asses till they bled.

In the mean time Tom Price kept up his spirits as well as he could. He worked hard all day, and prayed heartily night and morning. It is true, said he to himself, I am not guilty of this sin ; but let this accusation set me on examining myself, and truly repenting of all my other sins ; for I find enough to repent of, though I thank God I did not steal the widow's apples.

At length Sunday came, and Tom went to school as usual. As soon as he walked in there was a great deal of whispering and laughing among the worst of the boys ; and he overheard them say, 'Who would have thought it ? This is master's favourite !—This is parson Wilson's sober Tommy ! We shan't have Tommy thrown in our teeth again if we go to get a bird's nest, or gather a few nuts on a Sunday.' 'Your demure ones are always hypocrites,' says another. —'The still sow sucks all the milk,' says a third.

Giles's family had always kept clear of the school. Dick, indeed, had sometimes wished to go ; not that he had much sense of sin, or desire after goodness, but he thought if he could once read, he might rise in the world, and not be forced to drive asses all his life. Through this whole Saturday night he could not sleep. He longed to know what would be done to Tom. He began to wish to go to school, but he had not courage ; sin is very cowardly. So on the Sunday morning he went and sat himself down under the church wall. Mr. Wilson passed by. It was not his way to reject the most wicked, till he had tried every means to bring them over ; and even then he pitied and prayed for them.— He had, indeed, long left off talking to Giles's sons ; but seeing Dick sitting by himself, he once more spoke to him, desired him to leave off his vagabond life, and go with him into the school. The boy hung down his head, but made no answer. He did not, however, either rise up and run away, or look sulky, as he used to do. The minister desired him once more to go. 'Sir,' said the boy, 'I can't go ; I am so big I am ashamed.' 'The bigger you are the less time you have to lose.' But, sir, I can't read.' 'Then it is high time you should learn.' 'I should be ashamed to begin to learn my letters.' 'The shame is not in beginning to learn them, but in being contented never to know them.'—'But, sir, I am so ragged !' 'God looks at the heart, and not at the coat.' 'But, sir, I have no shoes and stockings.' 'So much the worse. I remember who gave you both—(Here Dick coloured.) It is bad to want shoes and stockings, but still if you can drive your asses a dozen miles without them, you may certainly walk a hundred yards to school without them.' 'But, Sir, the good boys will hate me, and won't speak to me.'—'Good boys hate nobody ; and as to not

speaking to you, to be sure they will not keep your company while you go on in your present evil courses, but as soon as they see you wish to reform, they will help you, and pity you, and teach you; and so come along.'—Here Mr. Wilson took this dirty boy by the hand, and gently pulled him forward, kindly talking to him all the way, in the most condescending manner.

How the whole school stared to see Dick Giles come in! No one however, dared to say what he thought. The business went on, and Dick slunk into a corner, partly to hide his rags, and partly to hide his sin; for last Sunday's transaction sat heavy on his heart, not because he had stolen the apples, but because Tom Price had been accused. This, I say, made him slink behind. Poor boy! he little thought there was ONE saw him who sees all things, and from whose eye no hole nor corner can hide the sinner: 'for he is about our bed, and about our path, and spieth out all our ways.'

It was the custom in that school, and an excellent custom it is, for the master, who was a good and wise man, to mark down in his pocket-book all the events of the week, that he might turn them to some account in his Sunday evening instructions; such as any useful story in the newspaper, any account of boys being drowned as they were out in a pleasure boat on Sundays, any sudden death in the parish, or any other remarkable visitation of Providence; insomuch, that many young people in the place, who did not belong to the school, and many parents also, used to drop in for an hour on a Sunday evening, when they were sure to hear something profitable. The minister greatly approved this practice, and often called in himself, which was a great support to the master, and encouragement to the people who attended.

The master had taken a deep concern in the story of widow Brown's apple tree. He could not believe Tom Price was guilty, nor dared he pronounce him innocent; but he resolved to turn the instructions of the present evening to this subject. He began thus: 'My dear boys, however light some of you may make of robbing an orchard, yet I have often told you there is no such thing as a *little* sin, if it be wilful or habitual. I wish now to explain to you, also, that there is hardly such a thing as a *single* solitary sin. You know I teach you not merely to repeat the commandments as an exercise for your memory, but as a rule for your conduct. If you were to come here only to learn to read and spell on a Sunday, I should think that was not employing God's day for God's work; but I teach you to read that you may, by this means, come so to understand the Bible and the Catechism, as to make every text in the one, and every question and answer in the other, to be so fixed in your hearts, that they may bring forth in you the fruits of good living.'

Master. How many commandments are there?

Boy. Ten.

Master. How many commandments did that boy break who stole widow Brown's apples?

Boy. Only one, master; the eighth.

Master. What is the eighth?

Boy. Thou shalt not steal.

Master. And you are very sure that this was the only one he broke? Now suppose I could prove to you that he probably broke not less than six out of those ten commandments, which the great Lord of heaven himself stooped down from his eternal glory to deliver to men, would you not, then, think it a terrible thing to steal, whether apples or guineas?

Boy. Yes, master.

Master. I will put the case. Some wicked boy has robbed widow Brown's orchard. (Here the eyes of every one were turned on poor Tom Price, except those of Dick Giles, who fixed his on the ground.) I accuse no one, continued the master, Tom Price is a good boy, and was not missing at the time of the robbery; these are two reasons why I presume that he is innocent; but whoever it was, you allow that by stealing these apples he broke the eighth commandment?

Boy. Yes, master.

Master. On what day were these apples stolen?

Boy. On Sunday.

Master. What is the fourth commandment?

Boy. Thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath-day

Master. Does that person keep holy the Sabbath-day who loiters in an orchard on Sunday, when he should be at church, and steals apples when he ought to be saying his prayers?

Boy. No, master.

Master. What command does he break?

Boy. The fourth.

Master. Suppose this boy had parents who had sent him to church, and that he had disobeyed them by not going, would that be keeping the fifth commandment?

Boy. No, master; for the fifth commandment says, *Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother.*

This was the only part of the case in which poor Dick Giles's heart did not smite him; he knew he had disobeyed no father; for his father, alas! was still wickeder than himself, and had brought him up to commit the sin. But what a wretched comfort was this! The master went on.

Master. Suppose this boy earnestly coveted this fruit, though it belonged to another person, would that be right?

Boy. No, master; for the tenth commandment says, *thou shalt not covet.*

Master. Very well. Here are four of God's positive commands already broken. Now do you think thieves ever scruple to use wicked words?

Boy. I am afraid not, master.

Here Dick Giles was not so hardened but that he remembered how many curses had passed between him and his father while they were filling the bags, and he was afraid to look up. The master went on.

I will now go one step further. If the thief, to all his other sins, has added that of accusing the innocent to save himself, if he should break the ninth commandment, by *bearing false witness against a harmless neighbour,* then six commandments are broken for an *apple!* But if it be otherwise, if Tom Price should be found guilty, it is not his good character shall save him. I shall shed tears over him, but punish him I must, and that severely. 'No, that you shan't,' roared out Dick Giles, who sprung from his hiding

place, fell on his knees, and burst out a crying, 'Tom Price is as good a boy as ever lived; it was father and I who stole the apples!'

It would have done your heart good to have seen the joy of the master, the modest blushes of Tom Price, and the satisfaction of every honest boy in the school. All shook hands with Tom, and even Dick got some portion of pity. I wish I had room to give my readers the moving exhortation which the master gave. But while Mr. Wilson left the guilty boy to the management of the master, he thought it became him, as a minister and a magistrate, to go to the extent of the law in punishing the father. Early on the Monday morning he sent to apprehend Giles. In the meantime Mr. Wilson was sent for to a gardener's house two miles distant, to attend a man who was dying. This was a duty to which all others gave way in his mind. He set out directly; but what was his surprise, on his arrival, to see, on a little bed on the floor, poaching Giles lying in all the agonies of death! Jack Weston, the same poor young man against whom Giles had informed for killing a hare, was kneeling by him, offering him some broth, and talking to him in the kindest manner. Mr. Wilson begged to know the meaning of all this; and Jack Weston spoke as follows:

'At four in the morning, as I was going out to mow, passing under the high wall of this garden, I heard a most dismal moaning. The nearer I came the more dismal it grew. At last, who should I see but poor Giles groaning, and struggling under a quantity of bricks and stones, but not able to stir. The day before he had marked a fine large net on this old wall, and resolved to steal it, for he thought it might do as well to catch partridges as to preserve cherries; so, sir, standing on the very top of this wall, and tugging with all his might to loosen the net from the hooks which fastened it, down came Giles, net, wall, and all; for the wall was gone to decay. It was very high indeed, and poor Giles not only broke his thigh, but has got a terrible blow on his head, and is bruised all over like a mummy. On seeing me, sir, poor Giles cried out, 'Oh, Jack! I did try to ruin thee by lodging that information, and now thou wilt be revenged by letting me lie here and perish.' 'God forbid, Giles! cried I; thou shalt see what sort of revenge a Christian takes.' So sir, I sent off the gardener's boy to fetch a surgeon, while I scampered home and brought on my back this bit of a hammock, which is indeed my own bed, and put Giles upon it: we then lifted him up, bed and all, as tenderly as if he had been a gentleman, and brought him in here. My wife has just brought him a drop of nice broth; and now, sir, as I have done what I could for this poor perishing body, it was I who took the liberty to send to you to come to try to help his poor soul, for the doctor says he can't live.

Mr. Wilson could not help saying to himself, Such an action as this is worth a whole volume of comments on that precept of our blessed Master, *Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you.* Giles's dying groans confirmed the sad account Weston had just given. The poor wretch could neither pray himself nor attend to the minister. He could only cry out, 'Oh! sir, what will become of me? I don't know how to repent. O my poor wicked children! Sir, I have bred them all up in sin and ignorance. Have mercy on them, sir; let me not meet them in the place of torment to which I am going. Lord grant them that time for repentance which I have thrown away!' He languished a few days, and died in great misery:—a fresh and sad instance that people who abuse the grace of God and resist his Spirit, find it difficult to repent when they will.

Except the minister and Jack Weston, no one came to see poor Giles, besides Tommy Price, who had been so sadly wronged by him. Tom often brought him his own rice-milk or apple-dumpling; and Giles, ignorant and depraved as he was, often cried out, 'That he thought now there must be some truth in religion, since it taught even a boy to *deny himself*, and to *forgive an injury.* Mr. Wilson the next Sunday, made a moving discourse on the danger of what are called *petty offences.* This, together with the awful death of Giles, produced such an effect that no poacher has been able to show his head in that parish ever since.

TAWNEY RACHEL;

OR, THE FORTUNE TELLER:

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF DREAMS, OMENS, AND CONJURORS.

Tawney Rachel was the wife of poaching Giles. There seemed to be a conspiracy in Giles's whole family to maintain themselves by tricks and pilfering. Regular labour and honest industry did not suit their idle habits. They had a sort of genius at finding out every unlawful means to support a vagabond life. Rachel travelled the country with a basket on her arm. She pretended to get her bread by selling laces, cabbage-nets, ballads, and history books, and used to buy old rags and rabbit skins. Many honest people trade in these things, and I am sure I do not mean to say a word against honest people, let them trade in what they will. But Rachel only made this traffic a pretence for getting admittance into farmers' kitchens in order to tell fortunes.

She was continually practising on the credulity of silly girls; and took advantage of their ignorance to cheat and deceive them. Many an innocent servant has she caused to be suspected of a robbery, while she herself, perhaps, was in league with the thief. Many a harmless maid has she brought to ruin by first contriving plots and events herself, and then pretending to foretel them. She had not, to be sure, the power

of really foretelling things, because she had no power of seeing into futurity: but she had the art sometimes to bring them about according as she foretold them. So she got that credit for her wisdom which really belonged to her wickedness.

Rachel was also a famous interpreter of dreams, and could distinguish exactly between the fate of any two persons who happened to have a mole on the right or the left cheek. She had a cunning way of getting herself off when any of her prophecies failed. When she explained a dream according to the natural appearance of things, and it did not come to pass; then she would get out of that scrape by saying, that this sort of dreams went by contraries. Now of two very opposite things, the chance always is that one of them may turn out to be true; so in either case she kept up the cheat.

Rachel, in one of her rambles, stopped at the house of farmer Jenkins. She contrived to call when she knew the master of the house was from home, which indeed was her usual way. She knocked at the door; the maids being in the field haymaking, Mrs. Jenkins went to open it herself. Rachel asked her if she would please to let her light her pipe? This was a common pretence, when she could find no other way of getting into a house. While she was filling her pipe, she looked at Mrs. Jenkins, and said, she could tell her some good fortune. The farmer's wife, who was a very inoffensive, but a weak and superstitious woman, was curious to know what she meant. Rachel then looked about carefully, and shutting the door with a mysterious air, asked her if she was sure nobody would hear them. This appearance of mystery was at once delightful and terrifying to Mrs. Jenkins, who, with trembling agitation, bid the cunning woman speak out. 'Then,' said Rachel in a solemn whisper, 'there is to my certain knowledge a pot of money hid under one of the stones in your cellar.'—'Indeed!' said Mrs. Jenkins, 'it is impossible, for now I think of it, I dreamt last night I was in prison for debt.' 'Did you really?' said Rachel; 'that is quite surprising. Did you dream this before twelve o'clock or after?'—'O it was this morning, just before I awoke.'—'Then I am sure it is true, for morning dreams always go by contraries,' cried Rachel. 'How lucky it was you dreamt it so late.'—Mrs. Jenkins could hardly contain her joy, and asked how the money was to be come at. 'There is but one way,' said Rachel; 'I must go into the cellar. I know by my art under which stone it lies, but I must not tell.' Then they both went down into the cellar, but Rachel refused to point at the stone unless Mrs. Jenkins would put five pieces of gold into a basin and do as she directed. The simple woman, instead of turning her out of doors for a cheat, did as she was bid. She put the guineas into a basin which she gave into Rachel's hand. Rachel strewed some white powder over the gold, muttered some barbarous words, and pretended to perform the black art. She then told Mrs. Jenkins to put the basin quietly down within the cellar; teling her that if she offered to look into it, or even to speak a word, the charm would be broken She also directed her to lock the cellar door, and on no pretence to open it in less than forty-eight hours. 'If,' added she, 'you closely follow these directions, then, by the power of my art, you will find the basin conveyed to the very stone under which the money lies hid, and a fine treasure it be!' Mrs. Jenkins, who firmly believed every word the woman said, did exactly as she was told, and Rachel took her leave with a handsome reward.

When farmer Jenkins came home he desired his wife to draw him a cup of cider; this she put off so long that he began to be displeased. At last she begged he would be so good as to drink a little beer instead. He insisted on knowing the reason, and when at last he grew angry, she told him all that had passed; and owned that as the pot of gold happened to be in the cider cellar, she did not dare open the door, as she was sure it would break the charm. 'And it would be a pity you know,' said she, 'to lose a good fortune for the sake of a draught of cider.' The farmer, who was not so easily imposed upon, suspected a trick. He demanded the key, and went and opened the cellar door; there he found the basin, and in it five round pieces of tin covered with powder. Mrs. Jenkins burst out a-crying; but the farmer thought of nothing but of getting a warrant to apprehend the cunning woman. Indeed she well proved her claim to that name, when she insisted that the cellar door might be kept locked till she had time to get out of the reach of all pursuit.

Poor Sally Evans! I am sure she rued the day that ever she listened to a fortune-teller. Sally was as harmless a girl as ever churned a pound of butter; but Sally was credulous, ignorant and superstitious. She delighted in dream books, and had consulted all the cunning women in the country to tell her whether the two moles on her cheek denoted that she was to have two husbands, or two children. If she picked up an old horse-shoe going to church, she was sure that would be a lucky week. She never made a black pudding without borrowing one of the parson's old wigs to hang in the chimney, firmly believing there was no other means to preserve them from burning. She would never go to bed on Midsummer eve without sticking up in her room the well-known plant called Midsummer-men, as the bending of the leaves to the right or to the left, would not fail to tell her whether Jacob, of whom we shall speak presently, was true or false. She would rather go five miles about than pass near a church-yard at night. Every seventh year she would not eat beans because they grew downward in the pod, instead of upward; and, though a very neat girl, she would rather have gone with her gown open than have taken a pin from an old woman, for fear of being bewitched. Poor Sally had so many unlucky days in her calender, that a large portion of her time became of little use, because on these days she did not dare set about any new work. And she would have refused the best offer in the country if made to her on a Friday, which she thought so unlucky a day that she often said what a pity it was that there were any Friday in the week. Sally had twenty pounds left her by her grandmother. She had long been courted by Jacob, a sober lad, with

whom she lived fellow servant at a creditable farmer's. Honest Jacob, like his namesake of old, thought it little to wait seven years to get this damsel to wife, because of the love he bore her, for Sally had promised to marry him when he could match her twenty pounds with another of his own.

Now there was one Robert, a rambling idle young gardener, who, instead of sitting down steadily in one place, used to roam about the country, and do odd jobs where he could get them. No one understood any thing about him, except that he was a down-looking fellow, who came nobody knew whence, and got his bread nobody knew how, and never had a penny in his pocket. Robert, who was now in the neighbourhood, happened to hear of Sally Evans and her twenty pounds. He immediately conceived a long desire for the latter. So he went to his old friend Rachel the fortune-teller, told her all he had heard of Sally, and promised if she could bring about a marriage between them, she should go shares in the money.

Rachel undertook the business. She set off to the farm-house, and fell to singing one of her most enticing songs just under the dairy window. Sally was so struck with the pretty tune, which was unhappily used, as is too often the case, to set off some very loose words, that she jumped up, dropped the skimming dish into the cream and ran out to buy the song. While she stooped down to rummage the basket for those songs which had the most tragical pictures (for Sally had a tender heart, and delighted in whatever was mournful) Rachel looked stedfastly in her face, and told her she knew by art that she was born to good fortune, but advised her not to throw herself away. 'These two moles on your cheek,' added she, 'show you are in some danger.' 'Do they denote husbands or children?' cried Sally, starting up, and letting fall the song of the Children in the Wood—'Husbands,' muttered Rachel—'Alas! poor Jacob!' said Sally, mournfully, 'then he will die first, won't he?' 'Mum for that,' quoth the fortune teller, 'I will say no more.' Sally was impatient, but the more curiosity she discovered, the more mystery Rachel affected. At last, she said, 'if you will cross my hand with a piece of silver, I will tell your fortune. 'By the power of my art I can do this three ways; first by cards, next by the lines on your hand, or by turning a cup of tea grounds; which will you have?' 'O, all! all!' cried Sally, looking up with reverence to this sun-burnt oracle of wisdom, who was possessed of no less than three different ways of diving into the secrets of futurity. Alas! persons of better sense than Sally have been so taken in; the more is the pity. The poor girl said she would run up stairs to her little box where she kept her money tied up in a bit of an old glove, and would bring down a bright queen Ann's sixpence very crooked. 'I am sure,' added she, 'it is a lucky one, for it cured me of a very bad ague last spring, by only laying it nine nights under my pillow without speaking a word. But then you must know what gave the virtue to this sixpence was, that it had belonged to three young men of the name of John; I am sure I had work enough to get it. But true it is, it certainly cured me. It must be the sixpence you know, for I am sure I did nothing else for my ague, except indeed taking some bitter stuff every three hours which the doctor called bark. To be sure I lost my ague soon after I took it, but I am certain it was owing to the crooked sixpence, and not to the bark. And so, good woman, you may come in, if you will, for thêre is not a soul in the house but me.' This was the very thing Rachel wanted to know, and very glad she was to learn it.

While Sally was above stairs untying her glove, Rachel slipped in to the parlour, took a small silver cup from the beaufet, and clapped it into her pocket. Sally ran down, lamenting that she had lost her sixpence, which she verily believed was owing to her having put it into a left glove, instead of a right one. Rachel comforted her by saying, that if she gave her two plain ones instead, the charm would work just as well. Simple Sally thought herself happy to be let off so easily, never calculating that a smooth shilling was worth two crooked sixpences. But this skill was a part of the black art in which Rachel excelled. She took the money and began to examine the lines of Sally's left hand. She bit her withered lip, shook her head, and bade her poor dupe beware of a young man who had black hair. 'No, indeed,' cried Sally, all in a fright, 'you mean black eyes, for our Jacob has got brown hair, 'tis his eyes that are black.' 'That is the very thing I was going to say,' muttered Rachel, 'I meant eyes, though I said hair, for I know his hair is as brown as a chesnut, and his eyes as black as a sloe.' 'So they are, sure enough,' cried Sally, 'how in the world could you know that?' forgetting that she herself had just told her so. And it is thus that these hags pick out of the credulous all which they afterwards pretend to reveal to them. 'O, I know a pretty deal more than that,' said Rachel, 'but you must beware of this man.' 'Why so,' cried Sally, with great quickness: 'Because,' answered Rachel, 'you are fated to marry a man worth a hundred of him, who has blue eyes, light hair, and a stoop in the shoulders.' 'No, indeed, but I can't,' said Sally; 'I have promised Jacob, and Jacob I will marry.' 'You cannot, child,' returned Rachel in a solemn tone; 'it is out of your power, you are *fated* to marry the gray eyes and light hair.' 'Nay, indeed,' said Sally, sighing deeply, 'if I am fated, I must; I know there's no resisting one's fate.' This is a common cant with poor deluded girls, who are not aware that they themselves make their fate by their folly, and then complain there is no resisting it. 'What can I do?' said Sally. 'I will tell you that, too,' said Rachel. 'You must take a walk next Sunday afternoon to the church-yard, and the first man you meet in a blue coat, with a large posy of pinks and southern-wood in his bosom, sitting on the church-yard wall, about seven o'clock, he will be the man.' 'Provided,' said Sally, much disturbed, 'that he has grey eyes and stoops.' 'O, to be sure,' said Rachel, 'otherwise it is not the right man.' 'But if I should mistake,' said Sally, 'for two men may happen to have a coat and eyes of the same co-

lour?' 'To prevent that,' replied Rachel, 'if it is the right man, the two first letters of his name will be R. P. This man has got money beyond sea.' 'O, I do not value his money,' said Sally, with tears in her eyes, 'for I love Jacob better than house or land; but if I am fated to marry another, I can't help it; you know there is no struggling against my fate.'

Poor Sally thought of nothing, and dreamt of nothing all the week but the blue coat and the gray eyes. She made a hundred blunders at her work. She put her rennet into the butter-pan, and her skimming-dish into the cheese-tub. She gave the curds to the hogs, and put the whey into the vats. She put her little knife out of her pocket for fear it should cut love, and would not stay in the kitchen if there was not an even number of people, lest it should break the charm. She grew cold and mysterious in her behaviour to faithful Jacob, whom she truly loved.—But the more she thought of the fortune-teller, the more she was convinced that brown hair and black eyes were not what she was fated to marry, and therefore, though she trembled to think it, Jacob could not be the man.

On Sunday she was too uneasy to go to church; for poor Sally had never been taught that her being uneasy was only a fresh reason why she ought to go thither. She spent the whole afternoon in her little garret, dressing in all her best. First she put on her red riband, which she had bought at last Lammas fair: then she recollected that red was an unlucky colour, and changed it for a blue riband, tied in a true lover's knot; but suddenly calling to mind that poor Jacob had bought this knot for her of a pedlar at the door, and that she had promised to wear it for his sake, her heart smote her, and she laid it by, sighing to think she was not fated to marry the man who had given it to her.—When she had looked at herself twenty times in the glass (for one vain action always brings on another) she set off, trembling and shaking every step she went. She walked eagerly towards the church-yard, not daring to look to the right or left, for fear she should spy Jacob, who would have offered to walk with her, and so have spoilt all. As soon as she came within sight of the wall, she spied a man sitting upon it: Her heart beat violently. She looked again; but alas! the stranger not only had on a black coat, but neither hair nor eyes answered the description. She now happened to cast her eyes on the church-clock, and found she was two hours before her time. This was some comfort. She walked away and got rid of the two hours as well as she could, paying great attention not to walk over any straws which lay across, and carefully looking to see if there were never an old horse-shoe in the way, that infallible symptom of good fortune. While the clock was striking seven, she returned to the church-yard, and O! the wonderful power of fortune-tellers! there she saw him! there sat the very man! his hair as light as flax, his eyes as blue as butter-milk, and his shoulders as round as a tub. Every tittle agreed to the very nosegay in his waistcoat button-hole. At first, indeed, she thought it had been sweetbriar, and glad to catch at a straw, whispered to herself, it is not he, and I shall marry Jacob still; but on looking again, she saw it was southern-wood plain enough, and that of course all was over. The man accosted her with some very nonsensical, but too acceptable, compliments. She was naturally a modest girl, and but for Rachel's wicked arts, would not have had courage to talk with a strange man; but how could she resist her fate you know? After a little discourse, she asked him, with a trembling heart, what might be his name? Robert Price, at your service, was the answer. 'Robert Price! that is R. P. as sure as I am alive, and the fortune-teller was a witch! It is all out! O the wonderful art of fortune-tellers!'

The little sleep she had that night was disturbed with dreams of graves, and ghosts, and funerals, but as they were morning dreams, she knew those always went by contraries, and that a funeral denoted a wedding. Still a sigh would now and then heave, to think that in that wedding Jacob would have no part. Such of my readers as know the power which superstition has over the weak and credulous mind, scarcely need be told, that poor Sally's unhappiness was soon completed. She forgot all her vows to Jacob; she at once forsook an honest man whom she loved, and consented to marry a stranger, of whom she knew nothing, from a ridiculous notion that she was compelled to do so by a decree which she had it not in her power to resist. She married this Richard Price, the strange gardener, whom she soon found to be very worthless, and very much in debt. He had no such thing as 'money beyond sea,' as the fortune-teller had told her; but alas! he had an other wife there.—He got immediate possession of Sally's twenty pounds. Rachel put in for her share, but he refused to give her a farthing, and bid her get away or he would have her taken up on the vagrant act. He soon ran away from Sally, leaving her to bewail her own weakness; for it was that indeed, and not any irresistible fate, which had been the cause of her ruin. To complete her misery, she herself was suspected of having stole the silver cup which Rachel had pocketed. Her master, however, would not prosecute her, as she was falling into a deep decline, and she died in a few months of a broken heart, a sad warning to all credulous girls.

Rachel, whenever she got near home, used to drop her trade of fortune-telling, and only dealt in the wares of her basket. Mr. Wilson, the clergyman, found her one day dealing out some very wicked ballads to some children. He went up with a view to give her a reprimand; but had no sooner begun his exhortation than up came a constable, followed by several people.—'There she is, that is the old witch who tricked my wife out of the five guineas,' said one of them, 'Do your office constable, seize that old hag. She may tell fortunes and find pots of gold in Taunton jail, for there she will have nothing else to do!' This was that very farmer Jenkins, whose wife had been cheated by Rachael of the five guineas. He had taken pains to trace her to her own parish: he did not so much value the loss of the money, as he thought it was a duty he owed the public to clear the country of

such vermin. Mr. Wilson immediately committed her. She took her trial at the next assizes, when she was sentenced to a year's imprisonment. In the mean time, the pawnbroker to whom she had sold the silver cup, which she had stolen from poor Sally's master, impeached her; and as the robbery was fully proved upon Rachel, she was sentenced for this crime to Botany Bay; and a happy day it was for the county of Somerset, when such a nuisance was sent out of it. She was transported much about the same time that her husband Giles lost his life in stealing the net from the garden wall, as related in the second part of poaching Giles.

I have thought it my duty to print this little history, as a kind of warning to all young men and maidens not to have any thing to say to *cheats*, *impostors*, *cunning-women*. *fortune-tellers*, *conjurors*, and *interpreters of dreams*. Listen to me, your true friend, when I assure you that God never reveals to weak and wicked women those secret designs of his providence, which no human wisdom is able to foresee. To consult these false oracles is not only foolish, but sinful. It is foolish, because they are themselves as ignorant as those whom they pretend to teach: and is sinful, because it is prying into that futurity which God, in mercy as well as wisdom, hides from men. God indeed *orders* all things; but when you have a mind to do a foolish thing, do not fancy you are *fated* to do it. This is tempting Providence, and not trusting him. It is indeed *charging God with folly*. Prudence is his gift, and you obey him better when you make use of prudence, under the direction of prayer, than when you madly run into ruin, aud think you are only submitting to your fate. Never fancy that you are compelled to undo yourself, or to rush upon your own destruction, in compliance with any supposed fatality. Never believe that God conceals his will from a sober Christian who obeys his laws, and reveals it to a vagabond gypsy who runs up and down breaking the laws both of God and man. King Saul never consulted the witch till he left off serving God. The Bible will direct us what to do better than any conjurer, and there are no days unlucky but those which we make so by our own vanity, sin, and folly.

THOUGHTS

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MANNERS OF THE GREAT,

TO GENERAL SOCIETY.

'You are the makers of manners.'—*Shakspeare.*

To a large and honourable class of the community, to persons considerable in reputation, important by their condition in life, and commendable for the decency of general conduct, these slight hints are respectfully addressed. They are not intended as a satire upon vice, or ridicule upon folly, being written neither for the foolish nor the vicious. The subject is too serious for ridicule; and those to whom it is addressed are too respectable for satire. It is recommended to the consideration of those who, filling the higher ranks of life, are naturally regarded as patterns, by which the manners of the rest of the world are to be fashioned.

The mass of mankind, in most places, and especially in those conditions of life which exempt them from the temptation to shameful vices, is perhaps chiefly composed of what is commonly termed by the courtesy of the world *good kind of people*; for persons of very flagitious wickedness are almost as rare as those of very eminent piety. To the latter of these, admonition were impertinent; to the former it were superfluous. These remarks, therefore, are principally written with a view to those persons of rank and fortune who live within the restraints of moral obligation, and acknowledge the truth, of the Christian religion; and who, if in certain instances they allow themselves in practices not compatible with a strict profession of Christianity, seem to do it rather from habit and want of reflection, than either from disbelief of its doctrines, or contempt of its precepts.

Inconsideration, fashion, and the world, are three confederates against virtue, with whom even good kind of people often contrive to live on excellent terms; and the fair reputation which may be obtained by a complaisant conformity to the prevailing practice, and by mere decorum of manners without a strict attention to religious principle, is a constant source of danger to the rich and great. There is something almost irresistibly seducing in the contagion of general example; hence the necessity of that vigilance, which it is the business of Christianity to quicken by incessant admonition, and which it is the business of the world, to lay asleep by the perpetual opiates of ease and pleasure.

A fair reputation is among the laudable objects of human ambition; yet even this really valuable blessing is sometimes converted into a snare, by inducing a treacherous security as soon as it is obtained; and by leading him who is too anxious about obtaining it to stop short without aiming at a higher motive of action. A fatal indolence is apt to creep in upon the soul when it has once acquired the good opinion of mankind, if the acquisition of that good opinion was the ultimate end of its endeavours. Pursuit is at an end when the object is in possession; for he is not likely to 'press forward,' who thinks he has already 'attained.' The love of worldly reputation, and the desire of God's favour, have this specific difference, that in the latter, the possession always augments the desire; and the spiritual mind accounts

nothing done while any thing remains undone.

But after all, a fair fame, the support of numbers, and the flattering concurrence of human opinion, is obviously a deceitful dependence; for as every individual must die for himself, and answer for himself, both these imaginary resources will fail, just at the moment when they could have been of any use. A good reputation, even without internal piety, would be worth obtaining, if the tribunal of heaven were fashioned after the manner of human courts of judicature. If at the general judgment we were to be tried by a jury of our fellow mortals, it would be but common prudence to secure their favour at any price. But it can stand us in little stead in the great day of decision, it being the consummation of infinite goodness not to abandon us to the mercy of each other's sentence; but to reserve us for *his* final judgment who knows every motive of every action: who will make strict inquisition into singleness of heart, and uprightness of intention; in whose eyes the sincere prayer of powerless benevolence will outweigh the most splendid profession or the most dazzling action.

We cannot but rejoice in every degree of human virtue which operates favourably on society, whatever be the motive, or whoever be the actor; and we should gladly commend every degree of goodness, though it be not exactly squared by our own rules and notions. Even the good actions of such persons as are too much actuated by a regard to appearances, are not without their beneficial effects. The righteousness of those who occupy this middle region of morality among us, certainly exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees; for they are not only exact in ceremonials, but in many respects fulfil the weightier matters of law and conscience. Like Herod, they often 'hear gladly,' and 'do many things.' Yet I am afraid I shall be thought severe in remarking that in general those characters in the New Testament, of whose future condition no very comfortable hope is given, seem to have been taken, not from the profligate, the abandoned, and the dishonourable; but from that decent class commonly described by the term *good sort of people*, that mixed kind of character in which virtue appears, if it do not predominate. The young ruler was certainly one of the first of this order; and yet we are left in dark uncertainty as to his final allotment. The rich man who built him barns and storehouses, and only proposed to himself the full enjoyment of that fortune, which we do not hear was unfairly acquired, might have been for all that appears to the contrary, a *very good sort of man*; at least if we may judge of him by multitudes who live precisely for the same purposes, and yet enjoy a good degree of credit, and who are rather considered as objects of respect, than of censure. His plan, like theirs, was 'to take his ease, to eat, drink, and be merry.'

But the most alarming instance is that of the splendid epicure, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. He committed no enormities that have been transmitted to us; for that he dined well and dressed well, could hardly incur the bitter penalty of eternal misery. That his expenses were suitable to his station, and his splendour proportioned to his opulence, does not exhibit one objection to his character. Nor are we told that he refused the crumbs which Lazarus solicited. And yet this man on an authority which we are not permitted to question, is represented, in a future state, as *lifting up his eyes being in torments*. His punishment seems to have been the consequence of an irreligious, a worldly spirit, a heart corrupted by the softness and delights of life. It was not because he was rich, but because he trusted in riches; or, if even he was charitable, his charity wanted that principle which alone could sanctify it. His views terminated here; this world's good, and this world's applause, were the motives and the end of his actions. He forgot God; he was destitute of piety; and the absence of this great and first principle of human actions rendered his shining deeds, however they might be admired among men, of no value in the sight of God.

There is no error more common, or more dangerous, than the notion that an unrestrained indulgence of pleasure, and an unbounded gratification of the appetites is generally attended with a liberal, humane, and merciful temper. Nor is there any opinion more false and more fatal, or which demands to be more steadily controverted, than that libertinism and good-nature are natural and necessary associates. For after all that corrupt poets, and more corrupt philosophers, have told us of the blandishments of pleasure, and of its tendency to soften the temper and humanize the affections, it is certain, that nothing hardens the heart like excessive and unbounded luxury; and he who refuses the fewest gratifications to his own voluptuousness, will generally be found the least susceptible of tenderness for the wants of others. In one reign the cruelties at Rome bore an exact proportion to the dissoluteness at Capreæ. And in another it is not less notorious: that the imperial fiddler became more barbarous, as he grew more profligate. Prosperity, says the Arabian proverb, fills the heart until it makes it hard; and the most dangerous pits and snares for human virtue are those, which are so covered over with the flowers of prosperous fortune, that it requires a cautious foot, and a vigilant eye, to escape them.

Ananias and Sapphira, were, perhaps, well esteemed in society; for it was enough to establish a very considerable reputation to sell even part of their possessions for religious purposes: but what an alarm does it sound to hypocrisy, that, instead of being rewarded for what they brought, they were punished for what they kept back! And it is to be feared, that this deceitful pair are not the only one, upon whom a good action, without a pure intention, has drawn down a righteous retribution.

Outward actions are the surest, and, indeed, to human eyes the only evidences of sincerity, but Christianity is a religion of *motives* and *principles*. The Gospel is continually referring to the *heart*, as the source of good; it is to the poor in *spirit*, to the pure in *heart*, that the divine blessing is annexed. A man may correct many improper practices, and refrain from many im-

moral actions, from merely human motives; but though this partial amendment is not without its uses, yet this is only attacking symptoms, and neglecting the mortal disease. But to subdue a worldly temper, to controul irregular desires, and to have 'a clean heart,' is to attack sin in its strong holds. Totally to *accomplish* this, is, perhaps, beyond the narrow limits of human perfection, the best men being constantly humbled to find, that when they 'would do good, evil is present with them;' but to *attempt* it, with an humble reliance on superior aid, is so far from being an extravagant or romantic flight of virtue, that it is but the common duty of every ordinary Christian. And this perfection is not the less real, because it is a point which seems constantly to recede from our approaches, just as the sensible horizon recedes from our natural eye. Our highest attainments, instead of bringing us 'to the mark,' only teach us that the mark is at a greater distance, by giving us more humbling views of ourselves, and more exalted conceptions of the state after which we are labouring.—Though the progress towards perfection may be perpetual in this world, the actual attainment is reserved for a better. And this restless desire of a happiness which we cannot reach, and this lively idea of a perfection which we cannot attain, are among the many arguments for a future state, which seem to come little short of demonstration. The humble Christian, takes refuge under the deep sense of his disappointments and defects, in this consoling hope, 'When I awake up after thy likeness I shall be satisfied.'

Let me not here be misunderstood as undervaluing the virtues which even worldly men may possess. I am charmed with humanity, generosity, and integrity, in whomsoever they may be found. But one virtue must not intrench upon another. Charity must not supplant faith. If a man be generous, good-natured, and humane, it is impossible not to feel for him the tenderness of a brother; but if, at the same time, he be irreligious, intemperate, or profane, who shall dare to say he is in a safe state? Good humour and generous sentiments, will always make a man a pleasant acquaintance; but who shall lower the doctrines of the Gospel, to accommodate them to the conduct of men? Who shall bend a straight rule to favour a crooked practice? Who shall controvert that authority which has said, that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord?*

May I venture to be a little paradoxical; and while so many grave persons are descanting on the mischiefs of vice, may I be permitted to say a word on the mischiefs of virtue, or, rather, of that shining counterfeit, which, while it wants the specific gravity, has much of the brightness of sterling worth? Never, perhaps, did any age produce more beautiful declamations in praise of virtue than the present; never were more polished periods rounded in honour of humanity. An ancient Pagan would imagine that Astrea had returned to take up her abode in our metropolis; a primitive Christian would conclude that 'righteousness and peace had there met together.' But how would they be surprised to find that the obligation to these duties was not always thought binding, not only on the reader, but on their eloquent encomiasts themselves. How would they be surprised to find that universal benevolence may subsist with partial injustice, and boundless liberality with sordid selfishness! that a man may seem eager in redressing the injuries of half the globe, without descending to the petty detail of private virtues: and burn with zeal for the good of millions he never saw, while he is spreading vice and ruin through the little circle of his own personal influence!

When the general texture of an irregular life is spangled over with some constitutional pleasing qualities; when gayety, good humour, and a thoughtless profusion of expense, throw a lustre round the faultiest characters, it is no wonder that common observers are blinded into admiration; a profuse generosity dazzles *them* more than all the duties of the decalogue. But though it may be a very good electioneering virtue, yet there are many qualities which may obtain popularity among men, which do not tend to secure the favour of God. It is somewhat strange that the extravagance of the great should be the criterion of their goodness with those very people who are themselves the victims to this idol; for the prodigal pays no debts if he can help it; and it is a notorious instance of the danger of these popular virtues, and of the false judgments of men, that in one of the wittiest and most popular comedies* which this country has ever produced, those very passages which exalt liberality, and turn justice into ridicule, were nightly applauded with enthusiastic rapture by those deluded tradesmen, whom, perhaps that very sentiment helped to keep out of their money.

There is another sort of fashionable character, whose false brightness is still more pernicious, by casting a splendour over the most destructive vices. Corrupt manners, ruinous extravagance, and the most fatal passion for play, are sometimes gilded over with many engaging acts of charity, and a general attention and respect to the ceremonials of religion. But this is degrading the venerable image and superscription of Christianity, by stamping them on a baser metal than they were ever intended to impress. The young and gay shelter themselves under such examples, and scruple the less to adopt the bad parts of such mixed characters, when they see that a loose and negligent, not to say immoral conduct, is so compatible with a religious profession.

But I digress from my intention; for it is not the purpose of this address to take notice of any actions which the common consent of mankind has determined to be wrong: but of such chiefly as are practised by the sober, the decent, and the regular; and to drop a few hints on such less obvious offences as are, in general,

Safe from the bar, the pulpit, and the throne.

Nor will the bounds which I have prescribed myself allow of my wandering into a wide and general field of observation.

The idea of the present slight performance was suggested by reading the king's late excel-

* The School for Scandal.

lent proclamation against irreligion and immorality.* Under the shelter of so high a sanction, it may not be unseasonable to press on the hearts of the better disposed, such observances as seem to be generally overlooked, and to remark such offences as commonly elude censure, because they are not commonly thought censurable.

It is obvious to all pious persons, that that branch of the divine law, against which the better kind of people trespass with the least scruple, is the fourth commandment. Many who would shudder at the violation of the other nine, seem without ceremony to expunge this from the Divine code; but by what authority they do this, has never been explained. The christian legislator does not seem to have abridged the commandments: and there is no subsequent authority so much as pretended to by Protestants.

It is not here intended to take notice of such flagrant offences as lie open to the cognizance of higher tribunals; or to pollute this paper with descanting on the holders of card assemblies on Sundays; the frequenters of taverns and gaming houses; the printers of Sunday newspapers; the proprietors of Sunday Stage-coaches; and others who openly insult the laws of the land; laws which will always be held sacred by good subjects, even were not the law of God antecedent to them.

Many of the order whom I here address are persons of the tenderest humanity, and not only wish well to the interests of virtue, but are favourably disposed to advance the cause of religion; nay, would be extremely startled at not being thought sincerely religious; yet from inconsideration, want of time, want of self-examination, want of a just sense of the high requirements of the Divine law, want of suspecting the deceitfulness of the human heart, sometimes allow themselves in inattentions and negligences which materially affect their own safety, and the comfort of others.—While an animated spirit of charity seems to be kindled among us: while there is a general disposition to instruct the ignorant, and to reform the vicious; we cannot help regretting that these amiable exertions should be counteracted, in some degree, by practices of a directly opposite tendency; trifling in their appearance, but serious in their effects.

There are still among us petty domestic evils, which seemed too inconsiderable to claim redress. There is an aggrieved body of men in our very capital, whose spiritual hardships seem scarcely to have been taken into consideration, I mean the HAIR DRESSERS on whom

> The Sunday shines, no day of rest to them.

Is there not a peculiar degree of unkindness in exercising such cruelty on the souls of men, whose whole lives are employed in embellishing our persons? And is it quite conceivable how a lady's conscience is able to make such nice distinctions that she would be shocked at the idea of sending for her mantuamaker† or milliner, her carpenter or mason, on a Sunday, while she makes no scruple regularly to employ a hair-dresser?

Is it not almost ridiculous to observe the zeal we have for doing good at a distance, while we neglect the little, obvious, every-day, domestic duties which should seem to solicit our immediate attention? But an action ever so right and praise-worthy which is only to be periodically performed, at distant intervals, is less burthensome to corrupt nature, than an undeviating attention to such small, constant right habits as are hostile to our natural indolence, and would be perpetually vexing and disturbing our self-love. The weak heart indulges its infirmity, by allowing itself intermediate omissions, and habitual neglects of duty; reposing itself for safety, on regular but remote returns of stated performances. It is less trouble to subscribe to the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, than to have daily prayers in our own families, and I am persuaded that there are multitudes of well-meaning people who would gladly contribute to a mission of Christianity to Japan or Otaheite, to whom it never occurred that the hair-dresser, whom they are every Sunday detaining from church has a soul to be saved; that the law of the land co-operates with the law of God, to forbid their employing him; and that they have no right, either legal or moral, to this portion of *his time*. The poor man, himself, perhaps, dares not remonstrate, for fear he should be deprived of his employment for the rest of the week. If there were no other objection to a pleasurable Sunday among the great and affluent, methinks this single one might operate: would not a devout heart be unwilling to rob a fellow creature of his time for devotion, or a humane one of his hour of rest? 'Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.'

It is strange that there should be so little consistency in human conduct, that the same persons should gladly contribute to spread the light of Christianity in another hemisphere; while, by their example, they actually obstruct the progress of it at home. But it is, I doubt not, much oftener owing to the imperceptible influence of custom and habit, than to a decided ill intention. Besides, it may be in morals as it is in optics, the eye and the object may come too close to each other, to answer the end of vision. There are certain faults which press too near our self-love to be even perceptible to us.

The petty mischief of what is called *card money* is so assimilated to our habits, and interwoven with our family arrangements, that even many of the prudent and virtuous no longer consider it as a worm which is feeding on the vitals of domestic virtue. How many poor youths, after having been trained in a wholesome dread of idleness and gaming, when they are sent abroad into the world, are astonished to find that part of the wages of the servant is to be paid by his furnishing the implements of diversion for the guests of the master. Thus good servants are a commodity which has long been diminishing by an elaborate system. The more sober the family, the fewer attractions it must necessarily have; for these servants will naturally quit a place, however excellent, where there

* This tract was written soon after the institution of the society for enforcing the king's proclamation against vice and irreligion.

† It is feared that since these pages were written the scruple of sending for either is much diminished.

is no play, for one where there is some; and a family where there is but little, for one where there is much. Thus if the advantage of the dependent is to increase in a direct ratio to the dissipation of his employer, what encouragement is left for valuable servants, or what prospect remains of securing valuable servants for sober minded families?

It will be said that so small an evil is scarcely worth insisting on. But a small fault which is become a part of a system, in time establishes an error into a principle. And that remonstrance which should induce people to abolish one wrong habit, or pluck out one rooted error, however trifling, would be of more real use than the most eloquent declamation against vice in general. To take out only one thorn from a suffering patient, is more beneficial to him than the most elaborate disquisition on the pain he is suffering from the thorns which remain.

It should be held as an eternal truth, that what is morally wrong can never be politically right. It would be arguing great ignorance of human nature, and exacting a very rigorous degree of virtue from a person of vulgar sentiments to expect that he should wish well to the interests of sobriety, or heartily desire the decrease of dissipation, while the growth of it is made so profitable to himself. It is requiring too much to make the temptation so forcible where the power of resistance is so weak. To hold out to a poor fellow the strong seduction of interest, and yet to expect he will retain the same inflexible principle, is to expect from an illiterate servant an elevation of virtue, which has not always been found even in statesmen and ministers.

It is not here intended to enter into any animadversion on the subject of play itself. But may we not ask without offence, if it be perfectly right to introduce any money arising from or connected with it, into a part of regular family economy? Is it not giving an air of system to diversion, which does not seem entirely of a piece with the other orderly practices of many discreet families where this odd traffic is carried on? Would not our ancestors, who seem to have understood economy and magnificence too, at least as well as their descendants, have been scandalized had it been proposed to them to incorporate play so intimately with the texture of their domestic arrangements, as that it should make part of their plan! And would they have thought it a very dignified practice not to have paid themselves for the amusements of their own houses; but to have invited their friends to an entertainment of which the guests were to defray part of the expense?

Let me suppose a case: what appearance would it have, if every gentleman who has partaken of the social entertainment of a friend's table, were after dinner, expected by the butler, to leave a piece of money under his plate to pay for his wine? Do not common sense, hospitality, friendship, and liberal feelings revolt at the bare suggestion of such a project? Yet there is in effect as little hospitality, as little friendship, and as little liberality in being obliged to pay for the cards as for the wine; both equally making a part of the entertainment.

It is hardly too ludicrous to add, that seeing how this point has been carried in favour of the groom of the chambers (and it descends down to the lowest footman,) we need not despair of seeing the butler insist on being allowed to furnish the wine, for which he shall compel the guests to pay with the same high interest with which they now pay for the cards. It will seem odd at first, but afterwards we shall think no more about it, to see him, during dinner, noting down those who drink the more costly wines, that they may be taxed double. And it will sound whimsical *at first*, to hear the butler give his master notice that he must quit his place, because the company have drank a little wine. This only sounds ridiculous, while the leaving a place through deficiency of card money sounds reasonable, because we are accustomed to the one, and the other is not yet become fashionable.

The extinction of this favourite perquisite would at first be considered as a violent innovation. All reformations seem formidable before they are attempted. The custom of *vails*, 'which gave corruption *broader* wings to fly,' was supposed to be invincible. Yet how soon did a general concurrence exterminate it! Had any one foretold twenty years ago, that in a very short space, near half a million of pilfering, swearing, Sabbath-breaking children, should be rescued from the streets, and brought into habits of sobriety and virtue, should we not have undertaken that the cleansing stream of religious instruction should thus be poured through the Augean stable of ignorance and vice, and in some measure wash away its grossest impurities?

The servant would probably complain of the annihilation of this gainful custom: but the master would find his account in indemnifying the loss; for he in his turn would be released from the preposterous contribution to the wages of other men's servants. If in a family of overgrown dissipation the stated addition should not be found equivalent to the relinquished perquisite, the servant must heroically submit to the disadvantageous commutation for the public good. And after all it would be no very serious grievance if his reduced income should not then exceed that of the chaplain. It will still at least exceed that of many a deserving gentleman, bred to liberal learning, whose feelings that learning has refined to a painful acuteness, and who is withering away in hopeless penury with a large family, on a curacy, but little surpassing the wages of a livery servant.

The same principle in human nature by which the nabob, the contractor, and others, by a sudden influx of unaccustomed wealth, become voluptuous, extravagant, and insolent, seldom fails to produce the same effect on persons in these humbler stations, when raised from inferior places, to the sudden affluence of these gainful ones. Increased profligacy on a sudden swell of fortune is commonly followed by desperate methods to improve the circumstances when impaired by the improvidence attending unaccustomed prosperity.

There is another domestic practice which it is almost idle to mention, because it is so difficult to redress, since such is the present state

of society, that even the conscientious think themselves obliged to concur in it. That ingenuity which could devise some effectual substitute for the daily and hourly lie of *Not at home*, would deserve well of society. Why will not some of those illustrious ladies who lead in the fashionable world invent some phrase which shall equally rescue from destruction the time of the master and the veracity of the servant? Some new and appropriate expression, the not adopting which should be blended with the stigma of vulgarity, might accomplish that which the charge of its being immoral has failed to accomplish.

The expediency of the denial itself, no one will dispute, who has a just idea of the value of time. Some scrupulous persons so very much dispute the lawfulness of making their servant's tongue the medium of any kind of falsehood, as to make it a point of conscience rather to lay themselves open to the irruption of every idle invader, who sallies out on morning visits bent on the destruction of business and the annihilation of study. People of very strict integrity lament that this practice induces a general spirit of lying, mixes itself with the habit, and by a quality, the reverse of an alterative, gradually undermines the moral constitution. Others on the contrary assert, that it is one of those lies of convention, no more intended to deceive than the *dear sir* at the beginning, or your *humble servant* at the close of a letter to a person who is not dear to you, and to whom you owe no subjection. There is, however, this very material difference, that if the first be a falsehood, you do not convey it by proxy: You use it yourself, and you use it to one who sets no more value on your words than you intended he should; and who shows you he does not, by using the same stated phrase in return, in addressing you, for whom he cares as little. Here the words pass for no more than they are worth.

The ill effect of the custom we are lamenting may be traced in marking the gradual initiation of an unpractised country servant. And who has not felt for his virtuous distress, when he has been ordered to call back a more favoured visitant, whom he had just sent away with the assurance that his lady was not at home? Who has not seen his suppressed indignation at being obliged to become himself the detector of that falsehood of which he had been before the instrument? But a little practice, and a repetition of reproof for even daring to *look* honest, soon cures this fault, especially as he is sure to be commended in proportion to the increased firmness of his voice, and the steadiness of his countenance.

If this evil, petty as it may seem to be, be really without a remedy; if the state of society be such that it cannot be redressed, let us not be so unreasonable as to expect that a servant will equivocate in small instances, and not in great ones. To hope that *he* will always lie for your convenience, and never for his own, is perhaps expecting more from human nature in a low and uncultivated state than we have any right to expect. Nor should the master look for undeviating and perfect rectitude from his servant, in whom the principle of veracity is daily and hourly weakened in conformity to his own command.

Let us bring home the case to ourselves, the only fair way of determining in all cases of conscience. Suppose we had established it into a system to allow ourselves regularly to lie on one certain given subject, every day; while we continued to value ourselves on the most undeviating adherence to truth on every other point. Who shall say, that at the end of one year's tolerable and systematic lying, on this individual subject, we should continue to look upon falsehood in general with the same abhorrence we did, when we first entered upon this partial exercise of it.

There is an evil newly crept into polished society, and it comes under a mask so specious, that they who are allured by it, come not seldom under the description of *good sort of people*. I allude to SUNDAY-CONCERTS. Many who would be startled at a profane or even a light amusement, allow themselves to fancy that the name of sacred music sanctifies the diversion. But if those more favoured beings, whom Providence enables to live in ease and affluence, do not make these petty renunciations of their own ways, and their own pleasure, what criterion have we by which to judge of their sincerity? For as the goodness of Providence has exempted them from painful occupations, they have neither labour from which to rest, nor business from which to refrain. A little abstinence from pleasure is the only valid evidence they have to give of their obedience to the divine precept.

I know with what indignant scorn this remark will, by many, be received: I know that much will be advanced in favour of the sanctity of this amusement. I shall be told that the words are, many of them, extracted from the Bible, and that the composition is the divine Handel's. But were the angel Gabriel the poet, the archangel Michael the composer, and the song of the Lamb the subject, it would not abrogate that statute of the Most High, which has said, 'Thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath day, and thy SERVANT, and thy CATTLE, shall do no manner of work.' I am persuaded that the hallelujahs of heaven would make no moral music to the ear of a conscientious person, while he reflected that multitudes of servants are through his means waiting in the street, exposed to every temptation; engaged, perhaps, in profane swearing, and idle, if not dissolute conversation, and the very cattle are deprived of that rest which the tender mercy of God was graciously pleased, by an astonishing condescension, to include in the commandment.

But I will, for the sake of argument, so far concede as to allow of the innocence and even piety of Sunday-concerts: I will suppose (what, however, does not often happen) that no unhallowed strains are ever introduced; I will admit that some attend these concerts with a view to cultivate devout affections; that they cherish the serious impressions excited by the music, and retire in such a frame of spirit as convinces them that the heart was touched while the ear was gratified: nay, I *would* grant, if such a concession would be accepted, that the intervals were filled up with conversation, 'whereby one

may edify another:' yet all those good effects, allowing them really to have been produced, will not remove the invincible objection of an EVIL EXAMPLE; and what liberal spirit would refuse any reasonable sacrifice of its own pleasure to so important a motive? Your servants have been accustomed to consider a concert as a secular diversion; if you, therefore, continue it on a Sunday, will not they also expect to be indulged on that day with their common amusements? Saint Paul, who was a very liberal thinker, believed it prudent to make frequent sacrifices of things indifferent in themselves. He was willing to deny himself a harmless and lawful gratification, *even as long as the world stood*, rather than shock the tender consciences of men of less understanding. Where a practice is neither good nor evil in itself, it is both discreet and generous to avoid it, if it can be attended with any possible danger to minds less enlightened, and to faith less confirmed.

But religion apart, I have sometimes wondered that people do not yield to the temptation that is held out to them, of abstaining from diversions one day in seven, upon motives of mere human policy; as voluptuaries sometimes fast, to give a keener relish to the delights of the next repast: for pleasure, like an over-fed lamp, is extinguished by the excess of its own aliment: not to say that the instrument of our gratification is often converted into our bane. Anacreon was choaked by a grape stone. The lovers of pleasure are not always prudent, even upon their own principles; for I am persuaded that this world would afford much more real satisfaction than it does, if we did not press, and torture, and strain it, in order to make it yield what it does not contain. Much good, and much pleasure, it does liberally bestow; but no labour or art, can extract from it that elixir of peace, that divine essence of content, which it is not in its nature to produce. There is good sense in searching into every blessing for its *hidden* properties; but it is folly to ransack and plunder it for such properties as the experience of all ages tells us are *foreign* to it. We exhaust the world of its pleasures, and then lament that it is empty: we wring those pleasures to the very dregs, and then complain that they are vapid. We erroneously seek in the world for that peace which we are repeatedly told is not to be found in it. While we neglect to seek it in *Him* who has expressly told us that *our* happiness depends on *his* having overcome the world.—'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as *the world giveth give I unto you.*'

I shall, probably, be accused of a very narrow and fanatical spirit in animadverting on a practice so little suspected of harm as the frequenting of public walks and gardens on a Sunday; and certainly there cannot be an amusement more entirely harmless in itself. But I must appeal to the honest testimony of our own hearts, if the *effect* be favourable to seriousness. Do we commonly retire from these places with the impressions which were made on us at church, in their full force? We entered these sprightly scenes, perhaps with a strong remaining tincture of that devout spirit which the public worship had infused into the mind: but have we not felt it gradually diminish? Have not our powers of resistance grown insensibly weaker? Has not the gayety of the scene converted, as it were, argument into allusion? The doctrines, which in the morning appeared the sober dictates of reason, now seem unreasonably rigid, and truths, which were then thought incontrovertible, now appear impertinent. To answer objections is much easier than to withstand allurements. The understanding may controvert a startling proposition with less difficulty than the sliding heart can resist the infection of seducing gayety. To oppose a cold and speculative faith to the enchantment of present pleasure, is to fight with inadequate weapons; it is resisting arms with rules; it is combating temptation with an idea. Whereas, he who engages in the christian warfare, will find that his chief strength consists in knowing that he is very weak; his progress will depend on his conviction that he is every hour liable to go back; his success, on the persuasion of his fallibility; his safety, on the assurance that to retreat from danger is his highest glory, and to decline the combat his truest courage.

Whatever indisposes the mind for the duty of any particular season, though it assume ever so innocent a form, cannot be perfectly right. If the heart be laid open to the incursion of vain imaginations, and worldly thoughts, it matters little by what gate the enemy entered. If the effect be injurious, the cause cannot be quite harmless. It is the perfidious property of certain pleasures, that though they seem not to have the smallest harm in themselves, they imperceptibly indispose the mind to every thing that is good.

Many readers will be apt to produce against all this preciseness, that hackneyed remark which one is tired of hearing, that Sunday diversions are allowed publicly in many foreign countries, as well in those professing the reformed religion, as popery. But the corruptions of one part of the protestant world are no reasonable justification of the evil practices of another. Error and infirmity can never be proper objects of imitation. It is still a remnant of the old leaven; and as to pleading the practice of Roman catholic countries, one blushes to hear an enlightened protestant justifying himself by examples drawn from that benighted religion, whose sanctions we should in any other instance be ashamed to plead.

Besides, though I am far from vindicating the amusements permitted on Sundays in foreign countries, by allowing that established custom and long prescription have the privilege of conferring right; yet foreigners may, at least, plead the sanction of custom, and the connivance of the law: while in this country, the law of the land, and established usage, concurring with still higher motives, give a sort of venerable sanction to religious observances, the breach of which will be always more liable to misconstruction than in countries where so many motives do not concur in its support.

I do not assert that all those who neglect a strict observation of the Lord's day are remiss in the performance of all their other duties

though they should bear in mind that the observance of their other duties is no atonement for the neglect of this; I will however venture to affirm, that all whom I have remarked conscientiously to observe this day from right motives, have been uniformly attentive to their general conduct. It has been the opinion of many wise and good men,* that Christianity will stand or fall, as this day is neglected or observed. Sunday seems to be a kind of Christian Palladium; and the city of God will never be totally taken by the enemy till the observance of that be quite lost. Every sincere soldier of the great Captain of our Salvation must, therefore, exert himself in its defence, if ever he would preserve the divine Fort of Revelation against the confederated attacks of the world and the devil.

I shall proceed to enumerate a few of the many causes which seem to impede well-disposed people in the progress of religion. None perhaps contributes more to it than that cold, prudential caution against the folly of aiming at *perfection*, so frequent in the mouths of the worldly wise. 'We must take the world,' say they, 'as we find it, reformation is not our business, and we are commanded not to be righteous overmuch.' A text by the way entirely misunderstood and perverted by people of this sort. But these admonitions are contrary to every maxim in human affairs. In arts and letters† the most consummate models are held out to imitation. We never hear any body cautioned against becoming too wise, too learned, or too rich. Activity in business is accounted commendable; in friendship it is amiable; in ambition it is laudable. The highest exertions of industry are commended; the finest energies of genius are admired. In all the perishing concerns of earthly things, zeal is extolled as exhibiting marks of a sprightly temper and a vigorous mind! Strange! that to be 'fervent in spirit,' should only be dishonourable in that single instance which should seem to demand unremitting diligence, and unextinguishable warmth.

But after all, is an excessive and intemperate zeal the *common* vice of the times? Is there any *very* imminent danger that the enthusiasm of the great should transport them to dangerous and inconvenient excesses? Are our young men of fashion so *very* much led away by the fervours of piety, that they require to have their imaginations tamed and their ardours cooled by the freezing maxims of worldly wisdom? Is the spirit of the age so *very* much inclined to catch and communicate the fire of devotion, as to require to be damped by admonition, or extinguished by ridicule? When the inimitable Cervantes attacked the wild notions and romantic ideas which misled the age in which he lived, he did wisely, because he combated an actually existing evil: but in this latter end of the 18th century, there seems to be little more occasion, (among persons of rank, I mean) of cautions against enthusiasm than against chivalry; and he who declaims against religious excesses in the company of well-bred people shows himself to be as little acquainted with the manners of the times in which he lives, as he would do who should think it a point of duty to write another Don Quixotte.

Among the devices dangerous to our moral safety, certain favourite and specious maxims are not the least successful, as they carry with them an imposing air of indulgent candour, and always seem to be on the popular side of good nature. Of the most obvious of these is, that method of reconciling the conscience to practices not decidedly wicked, and yet not scrupulously right by the qualifying phrase, *that there is no harm in it*. I am mistaken if more innocent persons do not inflame their spiritual reckoning by this treacherous apology than by almost any other means. Few are systematically, or premeditatedly wicked, or propose to themselves, at first, more than such small indulgences as they are persuaded *have no harm in them.* But this latitude is gradually and imperceptibly enlarged. As the expression is vague and indeterminate; as the darkest shade of virtue, and the brightest shade of vice, melt into no very incongruous colouring; as the bounds between good and evil are not always so precisely defined but that he who ventures to the confines of the one, will find himself on the borders of the other; every one furnishes his own definition; every one extends the supposed limits a little farther; till the bounds which fence in, permitted from unlawful pleasures, are gradually broken down and the marks which separated them imperceptibly destroyed.

It is, perhaps, one of the most alarming symptoms of the degeneracy of morals in the present day, that the distinctions of right and wrong are almost swept away in polite conversation. The most grave offences are often named with cool indifference; the most shameful profligacy with affected tenderness and indulgent toleration. The substitution of the word *gallantry* for that crime which stabs domestic happiness and conjugal virtue, is one of the most dangerous of all the modern abuses of language. Atroious deeds should never be called by gentle ames. This must certainly contribute more ian any thing to diminish the horror of vice in ie rising generation. That our passions should too often engaged on the side of error, we iay look for the cause, though not for the vinication, in the unresisted propensities of our onstitution: but that our *reason* should ever be xerted in its favour, that our *conversation* hould ever be taught to palliate it, that our *dgment* should ever look on with indifference,

* The testimony of one lawyer, will, perhaps, be less suspected than that of many priests 'I have ever found,' says the great lord chief justice Hale, 'by a strict and diligent observation, that a due observance of the duty of Sunday has ever had joined to it a blessing upon the rest of my time; and the week that has been so begun has been blessed and prosperous to me: and on the other side, when I have been negligent of the duties of this day, the rest of the week has been unsuccessful and unhappy to my own secular employments. So that I could easily make an estimate of my successes the week following, by the manner of my passing this day And I do not write this lightly but by long and sound experience.'—*Sir Matthew Hale's Works.*

† When Pliny the younger was accused of despising the degenerate eloquence of his own age, and of the vanity of aspiring at perfection in oratory, and of endeavouring to become the rival of Cicero; instead of denying the charge, he exclaimed with a noble spirit, 'I think it the height of folly not always to propose to myself the most perfect object of imitation.'

that our tongues should ever be employed to confound the eternal distinctions of right and wrong; this has no shadow of excuse: because this can pretend to no foundation in nature, no apology in temptation, no palliative in passion.

However defective, therefore, our practice may be; however we may be allured by seduction or precipitated by passion, let us beware of lowering the STANDARD OF RIGHT. This induces an imperceptible corruption into the heart, stagnates the noblest principles of action, irrecoverably debases the sense of moral and religious obligation, and prevents us from living up to the height of our nature, because it prevents us from knowing its possible elevation. It cuts off all communication with virtue, and almost prevents the possibility of a return to it. If we do not rise as high as we aim, we shall rise the higher for having aimed at a lofty mark: but where the RULE is low, the practice cannot be high, though the converse of the proposition is not proportionably true.

Nothing more benumbs the exertions of ardent youthful virtue than the cruel sneer which worldly prudence bestows on active goodness, and the cool derision it expresses at the defeat of a benevolent scheme, of which malice, rather than penetration, had foreseen the failure. Alas! there is little need of any such discouragements. The world is a climate which too naturally chills a glowing generosity, and contracts an expanded heart. The zeal of the most sanguine is but too apt to cool, and the activity of the most diligent, to slacken of itself: and the disappointments which benevolence encounters in the failure of her best concerted projects, and the frequent depravity of the most chosen objects of her bounty, would soon dry up the amplest streams of charity, were they not fed by the living fountain of religious principle.

I cannot dismiss this part of my subject without animadverting on the too prompt alacrity, even of worthy people, to disseminate, in public and general conversation, instances of their unsuccessful attempts to do good. I never hear a charity sermon begun to be related in mixed company that I do not tremble for the catastrophe, lest it should exhibit some mortifying disappointment, which may deter the inexperienced from running any generous hazards, and excite harsh suspicions, at an age when it is less dishonourable to meet with a few casual hurts, and transient injuries, than to go cased in the cumbersome and impenetrable armour of distrust. The liberal should be particularly cautious how they furnish the avaricious with creditable pretences for saving their money, since all the instances of the mortifications the humane meet with are carefully treasured up, and added to the armoury of the covetous man's arguments, and never fail to be produced by him as defensive weapons, upon every fresh attack on his heart or his purse.

But I am willing to hope that that uncharitableness which we so often meet with in persons of advanced years, is not always the effect of a heart naturally hard. Misanthropy is very often nothing but abused sensibility. Long habits of the world, and a melancholy conviction how little good he has been able to do in it, harden many a tender-hearted person. The milk of human kindness becomes soured by repeated acts of ingratitude. This commonly induces an indifference to the well-being of others, from a hopelessness of adding to the stock of human virtue and human happiness. This uncomfortable disease is very fond of spreading its own contagion, which is a cruelty to the health of young and uninfected virtue. For this distemper, generated by a too sanguine disposition, and grown chronical from repeated disappointments, from having rated worldly generosity too highly, there is but one remedy, or rather one prevention: and this is a genuine principle of piety. He who is once convinced that he is to assist his fellow creatures, because it is the will of God; he who is persuaded that his forgiving his fellow-servant the hundred pence, is a condition annexed to the remission of his own ten thousand talents, will soon get above all uneasiness when the consequence does not answer his expectation. He will soon become only anxious to do his duty, humbly committing events to higher hands. Disappointments will then only serve to refine his motives, and purify his virtue. His charity will then become a sacrifice with which God is well pleased! His affections will be more spiritualized, and his devotions more intense. Nothing short of such a courageous piety growing on the stock of Christian principle, can preserve a heart hackneyed in the world from relaxed diligence or criminal despair.

People in general are not aware of the mischief of judging of the righteousness of any action by its prosperity, or of the excellence of any institution by the abuse of it.

We must never proportion our exertions to our success, but to our duty. If every laudable undertaking were to be dropped because it failed in some cases, or was abused in others, there would not be left an alms-house, a charity-school, or an hospital in the land. If every right practice were to be discontinued because it had been found not to be successful in every instance, and if every right principle were rejected because it had not been operative in all cases, this false reasoning pushed to the extreme, might at last be brought as an argument for shutting up our churches, and burning our Bibles.

But if, on the one hand, there is a proud and arrogant discretion which ridicules, as Utopian and romantic, every generous project of the active and the liberal; so there is on the other, a sort of popular bounty which arrogates to itself the exclusive name of *feeling*, and rejects with disdain the influence of an higher principle. I am far from intending to deprecate this humane and exquisitely tender sentiment which the beneficent Author of our nature gave us, as a stimulus to remove the distresses of the others, in order to get rid of our own uneasiness. I would only observe that where not strengthened by superior motives, it is a casual and precarious instrument of good, and ceases to operate, except in the immediate presence, and within the audible cry of misery. This sort of feeling forgets that any calamity exists which is out of its own sight; and though it would empty its purse for such an occasional object as rouses transient sensibility, yet it seldom makes any stated pro-

vision for miseries, which are not the less real because they do not obtrude upon the sight, and awaken the tenderness of immediate sympathy. This is a mechanical charity, which requires springs and wheels to set it a going; whereas real Christian charity does not wait to be acted upon by impressions and impulses.

Another cause which very much intimidates well-disposed people, is their terror lest the character of piety should derogate from their reputation as men of sense. Every man of the world naturally arrogates to himself the superiority of understanding over every religious man. He, therefore, who has been accustomed to set a high value on his intellectual powers, must have made very considerable advances in piety before he can acquire a magnanimous indifference to this usurped superiority of another: before he can submit to the parsimonious allotment of wit and learning, which is assigned him by the supercilious hand of worldly wisdom. But this attack upon his pride will be no bad touchstone of his sincerity. If his advances have not been so considerable, then by an hypocrisy of the least common kind, he will be industrious to appear less good than he really is, lest the detection of his serious propensities should draw on him the imputation of ordinary parts or low attainments. But the danger is, that while he is too sedulously intent on maintaining his pretensions as an ingenious man, his claims to piety should daily become weaker. That which is long suppressed is too frequently extinguished.

Nothing, perhaps, more plainly discovers the faint impression which religion has really made upon our hearts, than this disinclination, even of good people, to serious conversation. Let me not be misunderstood; I do not mean the wrangle of debate; I do not mean the gall of controversy; I do not mean the fiery strife of *opinions*, than which nothing can be less favourable to good nature, good manners, or good society. But it were to be wished, that it was not thought ill-bred and indiscreet that the escapes of the tongue should now and then betray the 'abundance of the heart;' that when such subjects are casually introduced, a discouraging coldness did not instantly take place of that sprightly animation of countenance which made common topics interesting. If these 'outward and visible signs were unequivocal, we should form but moderate ideas of the 'inward and spiritual grace.' It were to be wished, that such subjects were not thought dull *merely* because they are good; it were to be wished that they had the common chance of fair discussion; and that parts and learning were not ashamed to exert themselves on occasions where both might appear to so much advantage. If the heart were really interested, could the affections forbear now and then to break out into language? Artists, physicians, merchants, lawyers, and scholars keep up the spirit of their professions by mutual intercourse. New lights are struck out, improvements are suggested, emulation is kindled, love of the object is inflamed, mistakes of the judgment are rectified, and desire of excellence is excited by communication. And is piety alone so very easy of acquisition, so very natural to our corrupt hearts, as to require none of the helps which are indispensable on all other subjects? Travellers, who are to visit any particular country, are full of earnest inquiry, and diligent research; they think nothing indifferent by which their future pleasure or advantage may be affected. Every hint which may procure them any information, or caution them against any danger, is thankfully received; and all this, because they are really in *earnest* in their preparation for this journey; and do fully *believe*, not only that there is such a country, but that they themselves have a personal individual interest in the good or evil which may be found in it.

A farther danger to *good kind of people* seems to arise from a mistaken idea, that only great and actual sins are to be guarded against. Whereas, in effect, temptations to the grosser sins do not so frequently occur to those who are hedged in by the blessings of affluence, by a regard to reputation and the care of health; while sins of omission make up, perhaps, the most formidable part of *their* catalogue of offences. These generally supply in number what they want in weight, and are the more dangerous for being little ostensible. They continue to be repeated with less regret, because the remembrance of their predecessors does not, like the remembrance of formal, actual crimes, assume a body and a shape, and terrify by the impression of particular scenes and circumstances. While the memory of transacted evil haunts a tender conscience by perpetual apparition; omitted duty, having no local or personal existence, not being recorded by standing acts and deeds, and dates, and having no distinct image to which the mind may recur, sinks into quiet oblivion, without deeply wounding the conscience, or tormenting the imagination. These omissions were, perhaps, among the 'secret sins,' from which the royal penitent so earnestly desired to be cleansed: and it is worthy of the most serious consideration, that these are the offences against which the Gospel pronounces some of its very alarming denunciations. It is not less against negative than against actual evil, that affectionate exhortation, lively remonstrance, and pointed parable, are exhausted. It is against the tree which bore NO fruit, the lamp which had NO oil, the unprofitable servant who made NO use of his talent, that the severe sentence is denounced; as well as against *corrupt* fruit, *bad* oil, and talents *ill* employed. We are led to believe, from the same high authority, that omitted duties and neglected opportunities, will furnish no inconsiderable portion of our future condemnation. A very awful part of the decision, in the great day of account, seems to be reserved merely for carelessness, omissions, and negatives. Ye gave me NO meat; ye gave me NO drink; ye took me NOT in; ye visited me NOT. On the punishment attending positive crimes, as being more naturally obvious, it was not, perhaps, thought so necessary to insist.

Another cause, which still further impedes the reception of Religion even among the well-disposed, is, that garment of sadness in which people delight to suppose her dressed; and that life of hard austerity, and pining abstinence,

which they pretend she enjoins on her disciples. And it were well if this were only the misrepresentation of her declared enemies; but unhappily, it is the too frequent misconception of her injudicious friends. But such an overcharged picture is not more unamiable than it is unlike; for I will venture to affirm, that religion, with all her beautiful and becoming sanctity, imposes fewer sacrifices, not only of rational, but of pleasurable enjoyment, than the uncontrolled dominion of any one vice. Her service is not only safety hereafter, but freedom here. She is not so tyrannizing as appetite, so exacting as the world, nor so despotic as fashion. Let us try the case by a parallel, and examine it, not as affecting our virtue but our pleasure. Does Religion forbid the cheerful enjoyments of life as rigorously as Avarice forbids them? Does she require such sacrifices of our ease as Ambition, or such renunciation of our quiet as Pride? Does Devotion *murder sleep* like Dissipation? Does she destroy health like Intemperance? Does she annihilate Fortune like Gaming? Does she embitter Life like Discord; or abridge it like Duelling? Does Religion impose more vigilance than Suspicion? or inflict half as many mortifications as Vanity? Vice has her martyrs: and the most austere and self-denying Ascetic (who mistakes the genius of Christianity almost as much as her enemies mistake it) never tormented himself with such cruel and causeless severity as that with which Envy lacerates her unhappy votaries. Worldly honour obliges us to be at the trouble of resenting injuries; and worldly prudence obliges us to be at the expense of litigating about them: but Religion spares us the inconvenience of the one, and the cost of the other, by the summary command to forgive; and by this injunction she consults our happiness no less than our virtue, for the torment of constantly hating any one must be, at least, equal to the sin of it. And resentment is an evil so costly to our peace that we should find it more cheap to forgive even were it not more right. If this estimate be fairly made, then is the balance clearly on the side of Religion, even in the article of pleasure.

It is an infirmity not uncommon to *good kind of people*, to comfort themselves that they are living in the exercise of some one natural good quality, and to make a religious merit of a constitutional happiness. They have also a strong propensity to separate what God has joined, belief and practice; the creed and the commandments; actions and motives; moral duty and religious obedience. Whereas, you will hardly find, in all the new Testament, a moral, or a social virtue, that is not hedged in by some religious injunction: scarcely a good action enjoined towards others, but it is connected with some exhortation to personal purity. All the charities of benevolence are, in general, so agreeable to the natural make of the heart, that it is a very tender mercy of God to have made that a duty, which, to finer spirits would have been irresistible as an inclination, and to have annexed the highest future reward to the greatest present pleasure. But in order to give a religious sanction to a social virtue, the duty of 'visiting the fatherless and widow in their affliction,' is inseparably attached to the difficult and self-denying injunction of 'keeping ourselves unspotted from the world.' This adjunct is the more needful, as many are apt to make a kind of moral commutation, and to allow themselves so much pleasure in exchange for so much charity. But one good quality can never stand proxy for another. The Christian virtues derive their highest lustre from association: they have such a spirit of society, that they are weak and imperfect when solitary; their radiance is brightened by an intermingling of their beams, and their natural strength multiplied by their alliance with each other.

It cannot be denied that *good sort of people* sometimes use religion as the voluptuous use physic. As the latter employ medicine to make health agree with luxury, the former consider religion as a medium to reconcile peace of conscience with a life of pleasure. But no moral chemistry can blend natural contradictions. In all such unnatural mixtures the world will still be uppermost, and religion will disdain to coalesce with its antipathy.

Let me not be suspected of intending to insinuate that religion encourages men to fly from society, and hide themselves in solitudes; to renounce the generous and important duties of active life for the visionary, cold, and fruitless virtues of an hermitage or a cloister. No: the mischief arises not from our living in the world, but from the world living in us; occupying our hearts, and monopolizing our affections. Action is the life of virtue; and the world is the theatre of action. Perhaps some of the most perfect patterns of human conduct may be found in the most public stations, and among the busiest orders of mankind. It is, indeed, a scene of trial, but the glory of the triumph is proportioned to the peril of the conflict. A sense of danger quickens circumspection, and makes virtue more vigilant. Lot, perhaps, is not the only character, who maintained his integrity in a great city, proverbially wicked, and forfeited it in the bosom of retirement.

It has been said that worldly *good sort of people* are a greater credit to their profession, by exhibiting more cheerfulness, gayety, and happiness, than are visible in serious Christians. If this assertion be true, which I very much suspect, is it not probable that the apparent ease and gayety of the former may be derived from the same source of consolation which Mrs. Quickly recommends to Falstaff, in Shakspeare's admirable picture of the death-bed scene of that witty profligate? 'He wished for comfort, quoth mine hostess, and began to talk of God; now I, to comfort him, begged him he should not think of God; it was time enough to trouble himself with these things.' Do not many deceive themselves by drawing water from these dry wells of comfort? and patch up a precarious and imperfect happiness in this world, by diverting their attention from the concerns of the next.

Another obstruction to the growth of piety, is that unhappy prejudice which even good kind of people too often entertain against those who differ from them in opinion. Every man who is sincerely in earnest to advance the interests

of religion, will have acquired such a degree of candour, as to become indifferent by whom good is done, or who has the reputation of doing it, provided it be actually done. He will be anxious to increase the stock of human virtue and of happiness by every possible means. He will whet and sharpen every instrument of goodness, though it be not cast in his own mould, or fashioned after his own pattern. He will never consider whether the form suits his own particular taste, but whether the instrument itself be calculated to accomplish the work of his master.

I shall conclude these loose and immethodical hints with a plain though short address to those who content themselves with a decent profession of the doctrines, and a formal attendance on the offices, instead of a diligent discharge of the duties of Christianity. Believe, and forgive me!—you are the people who lower religion in the eyes of its enemies. The openly profane, the avowed enemies to God and goodness, serve to confirm the truths they mean to oppose, to illustrate the doctrines they deny, and to accomplish the very prediction they affect to disbelieve. But you, like an inadequate and faithless prop, overturn the edifice which you pretend to support.—When an acute and keen-eyed infidel measures your lives with the rule by which you profess to walk, he finds so little analogy between them, the copy is so unlike the pattern, that this inconsistency of your's is the pass through which his most dangerous attack is made. And I must confess, that, of all the arguments, which the malignant industry of infidelity has been able to muster, the negligent conduct of professing Christians seems to me to be the only one which is really capable of staggering a man of sense.—He hears of a spiritual and self-denying religion; he reads the beatitudes; he observes that the grand artillery of the gospel is planted against pride and sensuality. He then turns to the transcript of this perfect original; to the lives which pretend to be fashioned by it. There he sees, with triumphant derision that pride, self-love, luxury, self-sufficiency, unbounded personal expense, and an inordinate appetite for pleasure, are reputable vices in the eyes of many of those who acknowledge the truth of the Christian doctrines. He weighs that meekness to which a blessing is promised, with that arrogance which is too common to be very dishonourable. He compares that non-conformity to the world, which the Bible makes the criterion of a believer, with that rage for amusement which is not considered as disreputable in a Christian. He opposes the self-denying and lowly character of the Author of our faith with the sensual practices of his followers. He finds little resemblance between the restraints prescribed, and the gratifications indulged in. What conclusions must a speculative reasoning sceptic draw from such premises? Is it any wonder that such phrases as 'a broken spirit,' a 'contrite heart,' 'poverty of spirit,' 'refraining the soul,' 'keeping it low,' and 'casting down high imaginations,' should be to the unbeliever 'foolishness,' when such humiliating doctrines are a 'stumbling block' to professing Christians; to Christians who cannot cordially relish a religion which professedly tells them it was sent to stain the pride of human glory, and 'to exclude boasting?'

But though the passive and self-denying virtues are not high in the esteem of mere good sort of people, yet they are peculiarly the evangelical virtues. The world extols brilliant actions; the Gospel enjoins good habits and right motives: it seldom inculcates those splendid deeds which make heroes, or teaches those lofty sentiments which constitute philosophers; but it enjoins the harder task of renouncing self, of living uncorrupted in the world, of subduing besetting sins, and of 'not thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought.' The *acquisition* of glory was the precept of other religions, the *contempt* of it is the perfection of Christianity.

Let us then be consistent, and we shall never be contemptible, even in the eyes of our enemies. Let not the unbeliever say that we have one set of opinions for our theory, and another for our practice, that to the vulgar

> We show the rough and thorny way to heav'n,
> While we the primrose path of dalliance tread.

Would it not become the character of a man of sense, of which consistency is a most unequivocal proof, to choose some rule and abide by it? An extempore Christian is a ridiculous character. Fixed principles, if they be really principles of the heart, and not merely opinions of the understanding, will be followed by a consistent course of action; while indecision of spirit will produce instability of conduct. If there be a model which we profess to admire, let us square our lives by it. If either the Koran of Mahomet, or the Revelations of Zoroaster, be a perfect guide, let us follow one of them. If either Epicurus, Zeno, or Confucius, be the peculiar object of our veneration and respect, let us avowedly fashion our conduct by the dictates of their philosophy; and then, though we may be wrong, we shall not be absurd; we may be erroneous, but we shall not be inconsistent; but if the Bible be in truth the word of God, as we profess to believe, we need look no farther for a consummate pattern. 'If the Lord be God, let us follow HIM.' If Christ be a sacrifice for sin; let Him be also to us the example of an holy life.

But I am willing to flatter myself that the moral and intellectual scene about us begins to brighten. I indulge myself in moments of the most enthusiastic and delightful vision, that things are beginning gradually to lead to the fulfilment of that promise, that 'all the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ.' I take encouragement that that glorious prophecy, that 'of the increase of his government there shall be no end,' seems to be gradually accomplishing; and in no instance more, perhaps, than in the noble attempt about to be made for the abolition of the African slave-trade.* For what event can human wisdom foresee more likely to contribute to 'give the SON the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession,' than the success of such an

* This interesting question was then beginning to be agitated in parliament.

enterprise, which will restore the lustre of the British name, and cut off at a single stroke as large and disgraceful a portion of national guilt as ever impaired the virtue or dishonoured the councils of a Christian country.

A good spirit seems to be at work. A catholic temper is diffusing itself among all sects and parties: an enlightened candour, and a liberal toleration, were never more prevalent; good men combat each others opinions with less rancour, and better manners;* they hate each other less for those points in which they disagree, and love each other more for those points in which they join issue than they formerly did. We have many public encouragements; we have a pious king; a wise and virtuous minister; very many respectable, and not a few serious clergy. Their number I am willing to hope is daily increasing. Among these some of the first in dignity are the most exemplary in conduct. An increasing desire to instruct the poor, to inform the ignorant, and to reclaim the vicious, is spreading among us. The late royal proclamation affords an honourable sanction to virtuous endeavours, and lends nerves and sinews to the otherwise feeble exertions of individuals, by enforcing laws wisely planned, but hitherto feebly executed. In short, there is a good hope that we shall more and more become 'that happy people who have the Lord for their God:' that as prosperity is already within our walls, peace and virtue may abide in our dwellings.

But vain will be all endeavours after *partial* and *subordinate* amendment. Reformation must begin with the GREAT, or it will never be effectual. *Their* example is the fountain whence the vulgar draw their habits, actions, and characters. To expect to reform the poor while the opulent are corrupt is to throw odours into the stream while the springs are poisoned.

If, therefore, the rich and great will not, from a liberal spirit of doing right, and from a christian spirit of fearing God, abstain from those offences, for which the poor are to suffer fines and imprisonments, effectual good cannot be done. It will signify little to lay penalties on the horses of the drover, or the wagon of the husbandman, while the chariot wheels of the great roll with incessant motion; and while the sacred day on which the sons of industry are commanded by royal proclamation to desist from travelling, is for that very reason selected for the journeys of the great, and preferred because the road is incumbered with fewer interruptions But will it not strike every well-meaning Sunday traveller with a generous remorse, when he reflects that he owes the accommodation of an unobstructed road to the very obedience which is paid by others to that divine and human law which he is in the very act of violating?

Will not the common people think it a little inequitable that they are abridged of the diversions of the public house and the gaming yard on Sunday evening, when they shall hear that many houses of the first nobility are on that evening crowded with company, and such amusements carried on as are prohibited by human laws even on common days? As imitation, and a desire of being in the fashion, govern the lower orders of mankind, it is to be feared that they will not think reformation reputable, while they see it *recommended* only, and not *practised*, by their superiors. A precept counteracted by an example, is worse than fruitless; it is ridiculous; and the common people will be tempted to set an inferior value on goodness, when they find it is only expected from the lower ranks. They cannot surely but smile at the disinterestedness of their superiors, who, while they seem anxiously concerned to save others, are so little solicitous about their own state. The ambitious vulgar will hardly relish a salvation which is only intended for plebians; nor will they be apt to entertain very exalted notions of that promised future reward, the road to which they perceive their betters are so much more earnest to point out to *them*, than to walk in themselves.

It was not by inflicting pains and penalties that Christianity first made its way into the world: the divine truths it inculcated received irresistible confirmation from the LIVES, PRACTICES, and EXAMPLES of its venerable professors. These were arguments which no popular prejudice could resist, no Jewish logic refute, and no Pagan persecution discredit. Had the primitive Christians only *praised and promulgated* the most perfect religion the world ever saw, it would have produced but very slender effects on the faith and manners of the people. The astonishing consequences which followed the pure doctrines of the Gospel, would never have been produced, if the jealous and inqusitive eye of malice could have detected that the DOCTRINES the Christians recommended had not been illustrated by the LIVES they led.

* This was written before the French revolution!!

POSTSCRIPT TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE public favour having already brought this little essay to another edition, the author has been sedulous to discover any particular objections that have been made to it. Since the preceding sheets were printed off, it has been suggested by some very respectable persons who have honoured this slight performance with their notice, that it inculcates a too rigid austerity, and carries the point of observing Sunday much too far; that it takes away all the usual occupations of the day, without substituting any others in their stead; and that it only pulls down a wrong system, without so much as attempting to build up a right one. To these observations the author begs leave to reply, that whilst animadverting on error, the insisting on obvious duty was purposely omitted. To tell people what they already know to be right, was less the intention of this address, than to observe upon practices which long habit had prevented them from perceiving to be wrong. Sensible and well-meaning persons can hardly be at a loss on a subject which has exhausted precept and wearied exhortation. To have expatiated on it,

would only have been to repeat what is already known and acknowledged to be right, even by those whom the hurry of engagements will not allow to take breath one day in a week, that they may run the race of pleasure with more alacrity on the other six. But probably it is not the duties, but the amusements appropriated to the day about which the inquiry is made. It will, perhaps, be found, that the intervals of a Sunday regularly devoted to all its reasonable and obvious employments, are not likely to be so very tedious, but that they might be easily and pleasantly filled up by cheerful, innocent, and instructive conversation. Human delights would be very circumscribed indeed, if the practices here noticed as erroneous, included the whole circle of enjoyments. In addition to the appropriate pleasures of devotion, are the pleasures of retirement, the pleasures of friendship, the pleasures of intellect, and the pleasures of beneficence, to be estimated as nothing?

There will not be found, perhaps, a single person who shall honour these pages with a perusal, who has not been repeatedly told, with an air of imposing gravity, by those who produce cards on a Sunday evening, *that it is better to play than to talk scandal.*—Before this pithy axiom was invented, it was not perhaps suspected that Sunday gaming would ever be adduced as an argument in favour of morals. Without entering into the comparative excellence of these two occupations, or presuming to determine which has a claim to pre-eminence of piety, may we not venture to be thankful that these alternatives do not seem to empty the whole stock of human resource; but that something will still be left to occupy and to interest those who adopt neither the one nor the other?

People in the gay and elegant scenes of life are perpetually complaining that an extensive acquaintance, and the necessity of being constantly engaged in large circles and mixed assemblies, leaves them little leisure for family enjoyment, select conversation, and domestic delights. Others, with no less earnestness, lament that the hurry of public stations, and the necessary demands of active life, allow them no time for any but frivolous reading. Now the recurrence of one Sunday in every week seems to hold out an inviting remedy for both these evils. The sweet and delightful pleasures of family society might then be uninterruptedly enjoyed, by the habitual exclusion of trifling and idle visiters, who do not come to see their friends, but to get rid of themselves. Persons of fashion, living in the same house, and connected by the closest ties, whom business and pleasure keep asunder during the greatest part of the week, would then have an opportunity of spending a little time together, and of cultivating that friendship for each other, that affection for their children, and that intercourse with their Maker, to which the present manners are not *very* favourable. To the other set of complainers, those who can find no time to read, this interval naturally presents itself; and it so happens, that some of the most enlightened men the world ever saw, have, not unfrequently, devoted their rare talents to subjects peculiarly suited to this day; and that not merely in the didactic form of sermons, which men of the world affect to disdain, but in every alluring shape which human ingenuity could assume. It can be fortunately produced among a thousand other instances, that the deepest metaphysician,* the greatest astronomer, the sublimest poet, the acutest reasoner, the politest writer, the most consummate philosopher, and the profoundest investigator of nature, which this, or perhaps any country has produced, have all written on such subjects as are analogous to the business of the Lord's day. Such authors as these, even wits, philosophers, and men of the world, must acknowledge that it is not bigotry to read, nor enthusiasm to commend. Of this illustrious group only *one* was a clergyman, which to a certain class of readers will be a strong recommendation; though it is a little hard that the fastidiousness of modern taste should undervalue the learned and pious labours of divines, only because they are *professional.*—In every other function, a man's compositions are not the less esteemed because they peculiarly belong to his more immediate business. Blackstone's opinions in jurisprudence are in high reputation, though he was a lawyer; Sydenham is still consulted as oracular in fevers, in spite of his having been a physician; and the Commentaries of Cæsar are of established authority in military operations, notwithstanding he was a soldier.

* Locke, Newton, Milton, Butler, Addison, Bacon, Boyle.

AN ESTIMATE

OF THE RELIGION OF THE FASHIONABLE WORLD.

There was never found in any age of the world, either philosophy, or sect, or religion, or law, or discipline, which did so highly exalt the public good as the Christian faith.—*Lord Bacon.*

INTRODUCTION.

The general design of these pages is to offer some cursory remarks, on the present state of religion among a great part of the polite and the fashionable; not only among that description of persons who, whether from disbelief or whatever other cause, avowedly neglect the duties of Christianity; but among that more decent class also, who, while they acknowledge their belief of its truth by a public profession, and are not inattentive to any of its forms, yet exhibit little of its spirit in their general temper and conduct. It is designed to show that Christianity, like its Divine Author, is not only *denied* by those who in so many words disown their submission to

its authority, but is *betrayed* by the still more treacherous disciple, even while he cries, *Hail, Master!*

For this visible declension of piety various reasons have been assigned, some of which however do not seem fully adequate to the effects ascribed to them. The author of a late popular pamphlet* has accounted for the increased profligacy of the *common people*, by ascribing it, very justly, to the increased dissoluteness of their superiors. And who will deny what he farther affirms—that the general conduct of high and low receives a deep tincture of depravity from the growing neglect of public worship? So far I most cordially agree with the noble author. Nothing can be more obvious than that the disuse of public worship is naturally followed by a neglect of all religious duties. Energies, which are not called out into action, almost necessarily die in the mind. The soul, no less than the body, requires its stated repairs, and regular renovations. And from the sluggish and procrastinating spirit of man, that religious duty to which no fixed time is assigned, is seldom, it is to be feared, performed at all.†

I must, however, take leave to dissent from the opinion of the noble author, that the too common desertion of persons of rank from the service of the establishment is occasioned in general, as he intimates, by their disapprobation of the Liturgy; as it may more probably be supposed, that the far greater part of them are deterred from going to church by motives widely removed from speculative objections and conscientious scruples.

It would be quite foreign to my present purpose to enter upon the question of the superior utility of a form of prayer for public worship. Most sincerely attached to the establishment myself, not, as far as I am able to judge, from prejudice, but from a fixed and settled conviction. I regard its institution with a veneration at once affectionate and rational. Never need a Christian, except when his own heart is strangely indisposed, fail to derive benefit from its ordinances, and he may bless the overruling providence of God, that, in this instance, the natural variableness and inconstancy of human opinion is, as it were fixed, and settled, and hedged in, by a stated service so pure, so evangelical, and which is enriched by such a large infusion of sacred Scripture.

If so many among us contemn the service as having been, individually, to *us* fruitless and unprofitable, let us inquire whether the blessing may not be withheld because we are not fervent in asking it. If we do not find a suitable humiliation in the *Confession*, a becoming earnestness in the *Petitions*, a congenial joy in the *Adoration*, a corresponding gratitude in the *Thanksgivings*, it is because our hearts do not accompany our words; it is because we rest in 'the form of godliness,' and are contented to remain destitute of its 'power.' If we are not duly interested when the select portions of Scripture are read to us, it is because we do not as 'new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby.'

Perhaps there has not been since the age of the Apostles, a church upon earth in which the public worship was so solemn and so cheerful; so simple, yet so sublime; so full of fervour, at the same time so free from enthusiasm; so rich in the gold of Christian antiquity, yet so astonishingly exempt from its dross. That it has imperfections we do not deny, but what are they compared with its general excellence? They are as the spots on the sun's disk, which a sharp observer may detect, but which neither diminish the warmth, nor obscure the brightness.

But if those imperfections which are inseparable from all human institutions, are to be alleged as reasons for abstaining to attend on the service of the established church, we must on the same principle, and on still stronger grounds, abstain from all public worship whatever; and indeed it must be confessed that the persons of whom we are now speaking are very consistent in this matter.

But the difference of opinion here intimated, is not so much about the Liturgy itself, as the imaginary effects attributed to it in thinning the pews of our people of fashion. The slightest degree of observation serves to contradict this assertion. Those, however, who, with the noble author, maintain the other opinion, may satisfy their doubts by inquiring, whether the regular and systematic absentees from church are chiefly to be found among the thinking, the reading, the speculative, and the scrupulous part of mankind.

Even the most negligent attendant on public worship must know, that the obnoxious creed, to whose malignant potency this general desertion is ascribed, by the noble author, is never read above three or four Sundays in the year; and even allowing the validity of the objections brought against it, that does not seem a very adequate reason for banishing the most scrupulous and tender consciences from church on the remaining eight-and-forty Sundays of the calender.

Besides, there is one test which is absolutely unequivocal: this creed is never read at all in the afternoon, any more than the Litany, that other great source of offence and supposed desertion; and yet with all these multiplied reasons for their attendance do we see the conscientious crowds of the high born, who abstain from the morning service through their repugnance to subscribe to the dogmas of Athanasius, or the more orthodox clauses of the morning Litany, do we see them, I say, flocking to the evening service, impatient for the exercise of that devotion which had 'been obstructed by these two objectionable portions of the Liturgy? Do we see them eager to explain the cause of their morning absence, and zealous to vindicate their piety by assiduously attending when the reprobated portions are omitted? So far from it, is it not pretty evident that the general quarrel (with some few exceptions) of those who habitually absent themselves from public worship, is not with the Creed, but the commandments? With such, to reform the Prayer-book would go but a little way, unless

* Hints to an Association for preventing Vice and Immorality, written by a nobleman of the highest rank.

† On this subject see Dr. Johnson's Life of Milton.

the new Testament could be also abridged. Cut, and pare, and prune the service of the church ever so much, still Christianity itself will be found full of formidable objections. Should the church even give up her abstruse creeds, it would avail but little, unless the Bible would also expunge those rigorous laws which not only prohibit sinful actions, but corrupt inclinations. And to speak honestly, I do not see how such persons as habitually infringe the laws of virtue and sobriety, and who are yet men of acute sagacity, accustomed on other subjects to a consistent train of reasoning; who see consequences in their causes; who behold practical self-denial necessarily involved in the sincere habit of religious observances—I do not see how, with respect to such men, any doctrines reformed, any redundancies lopped, any obscurities brightened, could effect the object of this author's very benevolent and Christian wish.

Religious duties are often neglected upon more consistent grounds than the friends of Religion are willing to allow. They are often discontinued, not as repugnant to the understanding, not as repulsive to the judgment, but as hostile to a licentious life. And when a prudent man, after having entered into a solemn convention, finds that he is living in a constant breach of every article of the treaty he has engaged to observe, one cannot much wonder at his getting out of the hearing of the heavy artillery which he knows is planted against him, and against every one who lives in the allowed infraction of the covenant into which every Christian has entered.

For a man of sense who should acknowledge the truth of the doctrine, would find himself obliged to submit to the force of the precept. It is not easy to be a comfortable sinner, without trying, at least, to be a confirmed unbeliever. And as that cannot be achieved by a wish, the next expedient is to shun the recollection of that belief, and to forget that of which we cannot be ignorant. The smallest remains of faith would embitter a life of libertinism, and to be frequently reminded of the articles of that faith would disturb the ease induced by a neglect of all observances. While to him who retains any impression of Christianity, the wildest festivals of intemperance will be converted into the terrifying feast of Damocles.

That many a respectable non-conformist is kept out of the pale of the establishment by some of the causes noticed by the noble author, cannot be questioned, and a matter of regret it is. But these, however, are often sober thinkers, serious inquirers, conscientious reasoners, whose object we may charitably believe is truth, however they may be deceived as to its nature: but that the same objections banish the great and the gay, is not equally evident. Thanks to the indolence and indifference of the times, it is not dogmas or doctrines, it is not abstract reasonings, or puzzling propositions, it is not perplexed argument, or intricate metaphysics, which can now disincline from Christianity; so far from it they cannot even allure to unbelief. Infidelity itself, with all that strong and natural bias which selfishness and appetite entertain in its favour, if it appear in the grave and scholastic form of speculation, argument, or philosophical deduction may lie almost as quietly on the shelf, as the volumes of its most able antagonist; and the cobwebs are almost as seldom brushed from Hobbes as from Hooker. No: prudent scepticism hath wisely studied the temper of the times, and skilfully felt the pulse of this relaxed, and indolent, and selfish age. It prudently accommodated itself to the reigning character, when it adopted sarcasm instead of reasoning, and preferred a sneer to an argument. It discreetly judged, that, if it would now gain proselytes, it must show itself under the bewitching form of a profane bon-mot; must be interwoven in the texture of some amusing history, written with the levity of a romance, and the point and glitter of an epigram: it must embellish the ample margin with some offensive anecdote or impure allusion, and decorate impiety with every loose and meretricious ornament which a corrupt imagination can invent. It must break up the old flimsy system into little mischievous aphorisms, ready for practical purposes: it must divide the rope of sand into little portable parcels, which the shallowest wit can comprehend, and the shortest memory carry away.

Philosophy therefore (as Unbelief by a patent of its own creation, has been pleased to call itself) will not do nearly so much mischief to the present age as its primitive apostles intended, since it requires time, application, and patience to peruse the reasoning veterans of the sceptic school: and these are talents not now very severely devoted to study of any sort, by those who give the law to fashion; especially since, as it was hinted above, the same principles may be acquired on cheaper terms, and the reputation of being philosophers obtained without the sacrifices of pleasure for the severities of study; since the industry of our literary chemists has extracted the spirit from the gross substance of the old unvendible poison, and exhibited it in the volatile essence of a few sprightly sayings.

If therefore in this voluptuous age, when a frivolous and relaxing dissipation has infected our very studies, Infidelity will not be at the pains of deep research and elaborate investigation, even on such subjects as are congenial to its affections, and promotive of its object; it is in vain to expect that Christianity will be more engaging, either as an object of speculation, or as a rule of practice; since it demands a still stronger exertion of those energies which the gay world is not at the pains to exercise, even on the side they approve. For the evidences of Christianity require attention to be comprehended, no less than its doctrines require humility to be received, and its precepts self-denial to be obeyed.

Will it then be uncharitable to pronounce, that the leading mischief, not which thins our churches (for that is not the evil I propose to consider) but which pervades our whole character, and gives the colour to our general conduct, is *practical irreligion?* an irreligion not so much opposed to a speculative faith, not so much in hostility to the evidences of Christianity, as to that spirit, temper, and behaviour which Christianity inculcates.

On this practical irreligion it is proposed to

offer a few hints. After attempting to show, by a comparison with the religion of the great in preceding ages, that there is a visible decline of piety among the higher ranks—that even those more liberal spirits who neglect not many of the great duties of benevolence, yet hold the severer obligations of piety in no esteem—I shall proceed, though perhaps with too little method to remark on the notorious *effects* of the decay of this religious principle, as it corrupts our mode of education, infects domestic conduct, spreads the contagion downwards among servants and inferiors, and influences our general manners, habits, and conversation.

But what it is here proposed principally to insist on is, that this defect of religious principle is almost equally fatal as to all the ends and purposes of genuine piety, whether it appear in the open contempt and defiance of all sacred institutions, or under the more decent veil of external observances, unsupported by such a conduct as is analogous to the christian profession.

I shall proceed with a few remarks on a third class of fashionable characters, who profess to acknowledge Christianity as a perfect system of morals, while they deny its divine authority: and conclude with some slight animadversions on the opinion which these modish Christians maintain, that morality is the whole of religion.

It must be confessed, however, that manners and principles act reciprocally on each other; and are, by turns, cause, and effect. For instance—the increased relaxation of morals produces the increased neglect of infusing religious principle in the education of youth; which effect becomes, in its turn, a cause, and in due time, when that cause comes to operate, helps on the decline of manners.

CHAP. I.

Decline of Christianity shown by a comparative view of the religion of the great in preceding ages.

If the general position of this little tract be allowed, namely, that Religion is at present in no very flourishing state among those whose example, from the high ground on which they stand, guides and governs the rest of mankind, it will not be denied by those who are ever so superficially acquainted with the history of our country, that this has not always been the case. Those who make a fair comparison must allow, that however the present age may be improved in other important and valuable advantages, yet, that there is but little appearance remaining among the great and the powerful of that 'righteousness which exalteth a nation.'—They must confess that there has been a *moral revolution* in the national manners and principles, very little analogous to that great *political* one which we hear so much and so justly extolled. That our public virtues bear little proportion to our public blessings; and that our religion has decreased in pretty exact proportion to our having secured the means of enjoying it.

That the antipodes to wrong are hardly ever right, was very strikingly illustrated about the middle of the last century, when the fiery and indiscreet zeal of one party was made a pretext for the profligate impiety of the other; who to the bad principle which dictated a depraved conduct, added the bad taste of being proud of it:—when even the least abandoned were absurdly apprehensive that an appearance of decency might subject them to the charge of fanaticism, a charge in which they took care to involve real piety, as well as enthusiastic pretence, till it became the general fashion to avoid no sin but hypocrisy; to dread no imputation but that of seriousness, and to be more afraid of the virtues which procure a good reputation than of every vice which ever earned a bad one. Party was no longer confined to political distinctions, but became a part of morals, and was carried into religion. The more profligate of the court party began to connect the idea of de votion with that of republicanism; and to prove their aversion to the one, though they could never cast too much ridicule upon the other. The public taste became debauched, and to be licentious in principle, was thought by many to be the best way of making their court to the restored monarch, and of proving their abhorrence of the hypocritical side. And *Poems by a person of honour*, the phrase of the day to designate a fashionable author, were often scandalous offences against modesty and virtue.

It was not till piety was thus unfortunately brought into disrepute, that persons of condition thought it made their sincerity, their abilities, or their good breeding questionable, to appear openly on the side of Religion. A strict attachment to piety did not subtract from a great reputation. Men were not thought the worst lawyers, generals, ministers, legislators, or historians, for believing, and even defending, the religion of their country. The gallant Sir Philip Sidney, the rash but heroic Essex, the politic and sagacious Burleigh, the all-accomplished Falkland,* not only publicly owned their belief in Christianity, but even wrote some things of a religious nature.† These instances, and many others which might be adduced, are not, it will be allowed, selected from among contemplative recluses, grave divines, or authors by profession; but from the busy, the active, and the illustrious; from public characters, from men of strong passions, beset with great temptations; distinguished actors on the stage of life; and whose respective claims to the title of fine gentlemen, brave soldiers, or able statesmen, have never been called in question.

What would the Hales, and the Clarendons, and the Somersets,‡ have said, had they been told that the time was at no great distance when that sacred book, for which they thought it no derogation from their wisdom or their dignity to entertain the profoundest reverence; the book which they made the rule of their faith, the object of their most serious study, and the founda-

* Lord Faulkland assisted the great Chillingworth in his incomparable work, The Religion of a Protestant.

† See that equally elegant and authentic work, 'The Anecdotes of Royal and Noble Authors'

‡ This consummate statesman was not only remarkable for a strict attendance on the public duties of religion, but for maintaining them with equal exactness in his family, at a period too when religion was most discountenanced.

tion of their eternal hope; that this book would one day be of little more use to men in high public stations, than to be the instrument of an oath; and that the sublimest rites of the christian religion would soon be considered as little more than a necessary qualification for a place, or the legal preliminary to an office.

This indeed is the boasted period of free inquiry and liberty of thinking: but it is the peculiar character of the present age, that its mischiefs often assume the most alluring forms; and that the most alarming evils not only look so like goodness as to be often mistaken for it, but are sometimes mixed up with so much real good, as often to disguise though never to counteract, their malignity. Under the beautiful mask of an enlightened philosophy, all religious restraints are set at nought; and some of the deadliest wounds have been aimed at Christianity, in works written in avowed vindication of the most amiable of all the christian principles!* Even the prevalence of a liberal and warm philanthropy is secretly sapping the foundation of christian morals, because many of its champions allow themselves to live in the open violation of the severer duties of justice and sobriety, while they are contending for the gentler ones of charity and beneficence.

The strong and generous bias in favour of universal toleration, noble as the principle itself is, has engendered a dangerous notion that all error is innocent. Whether it be owing to this, or to whatever other cause, it is certain that the discriminating features of the Christian religion are every day growing into less repute; and it is become the fashion, even among the better sort, to evade, to lower, or to generalize, its most distinguishing peculiarities.

There is so little of the Author of Christianity left in his own religion, that an apprehensive believer is ready to exclaim, with the woman at the sepulchre, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.' The locality of Hell and the existence of an Evil Spirit are annihilated, or considered as abstract ideas. When they are alluded to, it is periphrastically; or they are discontinued not on the ground of their being awful and terrible, but they are set aside as topics too vulgar for the polished, too liberal for the learned, and as savouring too much of credulity for the enlightened.

While we glory in having freed ourselves from the trammels of human authority, are we not turning our liberty into licentiousness, and wantonly struggling to throw off the *Divine* authority too? Freedom of thought is the glory of the human mind, while it is confined within its just and sober limits; but though we may think ourselves accountable for *opinions* at no earthly tribunal, yet it should be remembered that thoughts as well as actions are amenable at the bar of God; and though we may rejoice that the tyranny of the spiritual Procustes is so far annihilated, that we are in no danger of having our opinions lopped or lengthened till they are brought to fit the measure of human caprice, yet there is still a standard by which not only actions are weighed, but opinions are judged; and every sentiment which is clearly inconsistent with the revealed will of God, is as much as throwing off *his* dominion as the breach of any of his moral precepts. This cuts up by the roots that popular and independent phrase, that 'thoughts are free,' for in this view we are no more at liberty to indulge opinions in opposition to the express word of God, that we are at liberty to infringe practically on his commandments.

There is then surely one test by which it is no mark of intolerance to try the principles of men, namely, the *Law and the Testimony:* and on applying to this touchstone, it is impossible not to lament, that while a more generous spirit governs our judgment, a purer principle does not seem to regulate our lives. May it not be said, that while we are justly commended for thinking charitably of the opinions of others we seem, in return, as if we were desirous of furnishing them with an opportunity of exercising their candour by the laxity of principle in which we indulge ourselves? If the hearts of men were as firmly united to each other, by the bond of charity as some pretend, they could not fail of being united to God also by one common principle of piety. And christian piety furnishes the only certain source of all charitable judgment, as well as of all virtuous conduct.

Instead of abiding by the salutary precept of *judging no man*, it is the fashion to exceed our commission, and to fancy every body to be in a safe state. 'Judge not' is the precise limit of our rule. There is no more encouragement to judge falsely on the side of worldly candour, than there is to judge harshly on the side of Christian charity. In forming our notions we have to choose between the Bible and the world, between the rule and the practice. Where these do not agree it is left to the judgment of believers, at least, by which we are to decide. But we never act, in religious concerns, by the same rule of common sense and equitable judgment which governs us on other occasions. In weighing any commodity, its weight is determined by some generally allowed standard; and if the commodity be heavier or lighter than the standard weight, we add or take from it: but we never break, or clip, or reduce the weight to suit the thing we are weighing; because the common consent of mankind has agreed that the one shall be considered as the standard to ascertain the value of the other. But, in weighing our principles by the standard of the Gospel, we do just the reverse. Instead of bringing our opinions and actions to the *balance of the sanctuary*, to determine and rectify their comparative deficiencies, we lower and reduce the standard of the Scripture doctrines till we have accommodated them to our own purposes: so that instead of trying others and ourselves by

* See particularly Voltaire sur la Tolerance. This is a common artifice of that insidious author In this instance he has made use of the popularity he obtained in the fanatical tragedy at Thoulouse, (the murder of Calais) to discredit, though in the most guarded manner Christianity itself: degrading martyrdoms, denying the truth of the Pagan persecutions, &c &c. And by mixing some truths with many falsehoods, by assuming an amiable candour, and professing to serve the interest of goodness, he treacherously contrives to leave on the mind of the unguarded reader impressions the most unfavourable to Christianity,

God's unerring rule, we try the truth of God's rule by its conformity or non-conformity to our own depraved notions and corrupt practices.

CHAP. II.

Benevolence allowed to be the reigning virtue, but not exclusively *the virtue of the present age.—Benevolence not the whole of Religion, though one of its most characteristic features. Whether Benevolence proceeds from a religious principle, will be more infallibly known by the general disposition of time, fortune, and the common habits of life, than from a few occasional acts of bounty.*

To all the remonstrance and invective of the preceding chapter, there will not fail to be opposed that which we hear every day so loudly insisted on—the decided superiority of the present age in other and better respects. It will be said, that even those who neglect the outward forms of religion, exhibit, however, the best proofs of the best principles; that the unparalleled instances of charity of which we are continual witnesses; that the many striking acts of public bounty, and the various new and noble improvements in this shining virtue, justly entitle the present age to be called, by way of eminence, *the Age of Benevolence.*

It is with the liveliest joy I acknowledge the delightful truth. Liberality flows with a full tide through a thousand channels. There is scarcely a newspaper but records some meeting of men of fortune for the most salutary purposes. The noble and numberless structures for the relief of distress, which are the ornament and the glory of our metropolis, proclaim a species of munificence unknown to former ages. Subscriptions, not only to hospitals, but to various other valuable institutions, are obtained almost as soon as solicited. And who but must wish that these beautiful monuments of benevolence may become every day more numerous, and more extended!

Yet, with all these allowed and obvious excellences, it is not quite clear whether something too much has not been said of the liberality of the present age, in a comparative view with that of those ages which preceded it. A general alteration of habits and manners has at the same time multiplied public bounties and private distress; and it is scarcely a paradox, to say that there was probably less misery when there was less munificence.

If an increased benevolence now ranges through and relieves a wider compass of distress; yet still, if those examples of luxury and dissipation which promote that distress are still *more* increased, this makes the good done, bear little proportion to the evil promoted. If the miseries removed by the growth of charity fall, both in number and weight, far below those which are caused by the growth of vice and disorder; if we find that, though bounty is extended, yet those corruptions which make bounty so necessary are extended also, almost beyond calculation; if it appear that, though more objects are relieved by our money, yet incomparably more are debauched by our licentiousness—the balance perhaps will not turn out so decidedly in our favour of the times as we are willing to imagine.

If then the most valuable species of charity is that which prevents distress by preventing or lessening vice, the greatest and most inevitable cause of want—we ought not so highly to exalt the bounty of the great in the present day, in preference to that broad shade of protection, patronage, and maintenance, which the wide-spread bounty of their forefathers stretched out over whole villages, I had almost said whole provinces. When a few noblemen in a county, like their own stately oaks, (paternal oaks! which were not often set upon a card,) extended their sheltering branches to shield all the underwood of the forest—when there existed a kind of passive charity, a negative sort of benevolence, which did good of itself; and without effort, exertion, or expense, produced the effect of all, and performed the best functions of bounty, though it did not aspire to the dignity of its name—it was simply this:—*great people staid at home;* and the sober pomp and orderly magnificence of a noble family, residing at their own castle a great part of the year, contributed in the most natural way to the maintenance of the poor; and in a good degree prevented their distress, which it must however thankfully be confessed it is the laudable object of modern bounty to relieve. A man of fortune might not then, it is true, so often dine in public for the benefit of the poor; but the poor were more regularly and comfortably fed with the abundant crumbs which then fell from the rich man's table. Whereas it cannot be denied that the prevailing mode of living has pared real hospitality to the very quick; and, though the remark may be thought ridiculous, it is a material disadvantage to the poor, that the introduction of the modern style of luxury has rendered the remains of the most costly table but of small value.

But even allowing the boasted superiority of modern benevolence, still it would not be inconsistent with the object of the present design, to inquire whether the diffusion of this branch of charity, though the most lovely offspring of religion, be yet any positive proof of the prevalence of religious principle? and whether it be not the fashion rather to consider benevolence as a substitute for Christianity than as an evidence of it?

It seems to be one of the reigning errors among the better sort, to reduce all religion into benevolence, and all benevolence into alms-giving. The wide and comprehensive idea of christian charity is compressed into the slender compass of a little pecuniary relief. This species of benevolence is indeed a bright gem among the ornaments of a Christian; but by no means furnishes all the jewels of his crown, which derives its lustre from the associated radiance of every christian grace. Besides, the genuine virtues are all of the same family: and it is only by being seen in company with each other, and with Piety their common parent, that they are certainly known to be legitimate.

But it is the property of the *christian* virtues, that, like all other amiable members of the same

family, while each is doing its own particular duty, it is contributing to the prosperity of the rest; and the larger the family, the better they live together, as no one can advance itself without labouring for the advancement of the whole: thus, no man can be benevolent on Christian principles without self-denial; and so of the other virtues: each is connected with some other, and all with Religion.

I already anticipate the obvious and hackneyed reply, that, 'whoever be the instrument, and whatever be the motive of bounty, still the poor are equally relieved, and therefore the end is the same.' And it must be confessed that those compassionate hearts, who cannot but be earnestly anxious that the distressed should be relieved at any rate, should not too scrupulously inquire into any cause of which the effect is so beneficial. Nor indeed will candour scrutinize too curiously into the errors of any life of which benevolence will always be allowed to be the shining ornament, while it does not pretend to be the atoning virtue.

Let me not be misrepresented, as if I were seeking to detract from the value of this amiable feeling; we do not surely lower the practice by seeking to enoble the principle; the action will not be impaired by mending the motive; and no one will be likely to give the poor less because he seeks to please God more.

One cannot then help wishing that pecuniary bounty were not only not practised, but that it were not sometimes enjoined too, as a redeeming virtue. In many conversations, (I had almost said in many charity-sermons,) it is insinuated as if a little alms-giving could pay off old scores contracted by favourite indulgences. This, though often done by well-meaning men to advance the interests of some present pious purpose, yet has the mischievous effect of those medicines which, while they may relieve a local complaint, are yet undermining the general habit.

That great numbers who are not influenced by so high a principle as Christianity holds out, are yet truly compassionate without hypocrisy and without ostentation, who can doubt? But who that feels the beauty of benevolence can avoid being solicitous, not only that its offerings should comfort the receiver, but return in blessings to the bosom of the giver, by springing from such motives, and being accompanied by such a temper as shall redound to his eternal good? For that the benefit is the same to the object, whatever be the character of the benefactor, is but an uncomfortable view of things to a real Christian, whose compassion reaches to the souls of men. Such a one longs to see the charitable giver as happy as he is endeavouring to make the object of his bounty: but such a one knows that no happiness can be fully and finally enjoyed but on the solid basis of christian piety.

For as Religion is not, on the one hand, merely an opinion or a sentiment, so neither is it, on the other, merely an act or a performance; but it is a disposition, a habit, a temper: it is not a name, but a nature: it is a turning the whole mind to God: it is a concentration of all the powers and affections of the soul into one steady point, an uniform desire to please *Him*. This desire will naturally and necessarily manifest itself in our doing all the good we can to our fellow-creatures in every possible way; for it will be found that neither of the two parts into which practical religion is divided, can be performed with any degree of perfection but by those who unite both; as it may be questioned if any man really *does* 'love his neighbour as himself,' who does not first endeavour to 'love God with all his heart.' As genius has been defined to be strong general powers of mind, accidentally determined to some particular pursuit, so piety may be denominated a strong general disposition of the heart to every thing that is right, breaking forth into every excellent action, as the occasion presents itself. The temper must be ready in the mind, and the whole heart must be prepared and trained to every act of virtue to which it may be called out. For religious principles are like the military exercise; they keep up an habitual state of preparation for actual service; and, by never relaxing the discipline, the real Christian is ready for every duty to which he may be commanded. Right actions best prove the existence of religion of the heart; but they are evidences, not causes.

Whether therefore, a man's charitable actions proceed from religious principle, he will be best able to ascertain by scrutinizing into what is the general disposition of his time and fortune, and by observing whether his pleasures and expenses are habitually regulated with a view to enable him to be more or less useful to others.

It is in vain that he possesses what is called by the courtesy of fashion, *the best heart in the world*, (a character we every day hear applied to the libertine and the prodigal,) if he squander his time and estate in such a round of extravagant indulgences and thoughtless dissipation as leaves him little money, and less leisure for nobler purposes. It makes but little difference whether a man is prevented from doing good by hard-hearted parsimony or an unprincipled extravagance; the stream of usefulness is equally cut off by both.

The mere *casual* benevolence of any man can have little claim to solid esteem; nor does any charity deserve the name, which does not grow out of a tender conviction that it is his bounden duty; which does not spring from a settled propensity to obey the whole will of God; which is not therefore made a part of the general plan of his conduct; and which does not lead him to order the whole scheme of his affairs with an eye to it.

He therefore, who does not habituate himself to certain interior restraints, who does not live in a regular course of self-renunciation, will not be likely often to perform acts of beneficence, when it becomes necessary to convert to such purposes any of that time or money which appetite, temptation, or vanity solicit him to divert to other purposes.

And surely he who seldom sacrifices one darling indulgence, who does not subtract one gratification from the incessant round of his enjoyments, when the indulgence would obstruct his

capacity of doing good, or when the sacrifice would enlarge his power, does not deserve the name of *benevolent*. And for such an unequivocal criterion of charity, to whom are we to look, but to the conscientious Christian? No other spirit but that by which he is governed, can subdue self-love: and where self-love is the predominant passion, benevolence can have but a feeble, or an accidental dominion.

Now if we look around, and remark the excesses of luxury, the costly diversions, and the intemperate dissipation in which numbers of professing Christians indulge themselves, can any stretch of candour, can even that tender sentiment by which we are enjoined 'to hope' and to 'believe all things,' enable us to hope and believe that such are actuated by a spirit of christian benevolence, merely because we see them perform some casual acts of charity, which the spirit of the world can contrive to make extremely compatible with a voluptuous life; and the cost of which, after all, bears but little proportion to that of any one vice, or even vanity.

Men will not believe that there is hardly any one human good quality which will know and keep its proper bounds, without the restraining influence of religious principle. There is, for instance, great danger lest a constant attention to so right a practice as an invariable economy, should incline the heart to the love of money. Nothing can effectually counteract this natural propensity but the christian habit of devoting those retrenched expenses to some good purpose; and then economy instead of narrowing the heart, will enlarge it, by inducing a constant association of benevolence with frugality. An habitual attention to the wants of others is the only wholesome regulator of our own expenses; and carries with it a whole train of virtues, disinterestedness, sobriety, and temperance. And those who live in the custom of levying constant taxes on their vanities for such purposes, serve the poor still less than they serve themselves. For if they are charitable upon true christian principles, 'they are laying up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come.'

Thus when a vein of Christianity runs through the whole mass of a man's life, it gives a new value to all his actions, and a new character to all his views. It transmutes prudence and economy into christian virtues; and every offering that is presented on the altar of charity becomes truly consecrated, when it is the gift of obedience, and the price of self-denial. Piety is that fire from heaven that can alone kindle the sacrifice, which through the mediation and intercession of our great High Priest, 'will go up for a memorial before God.'

On the other hand, when any act of bounty is performed by way of composition with our Maker, either as a purchase or an expiation of unallowed indulgences; though, even in this case, God (who makes all passions of men subservient to his good purposes,) can make the gift equally beneficial to the receiver, yet it is surely not too severe to say, that to the giver such acts are an unfounded dependence, a deceitful refuge, a broken staff.

CHAP. III.

The neglect of religious education, both a cause and a consequence of the decline of Christianity.—No moral restraints.—Religion only incidentally taught, not as a principle of action. A few of the many causes which dispose the young to entertain low opinions of Religion.

Let not the truly pious be offended, as if, in the present chapter, which is intended to treat of the notorious neglect of religious education, I meant to insinuate, that the principles and tempers of Christianity may be formed in the young mind, by the mere mechanical operation of early instruction, without the co-operating aid of the Holy Spirit of God. To imply this would be indeed to betray a lamentable ignorance of human nature, of the disorder that sin has introduced, of the inefficacy of mere human means; and entirely to mistake the genius, and overlook the most obvious and important truths of our holy religion.

It must however be allowed, that the Supreme Being works chiefly by means; and though it be confessed that no defect of education, no corruption of manners can place any out of the reach of the Divine influences (for it is under such circumstances, perhaps, that some of the most extraordinary instances of Divine grace have been manifested) yet it must be owned, that instructing children in principles of religion, and giving them early habits of temperance and piety, is the way in which we may most confidently expect the Divine blessing.— And that it is a work highly pleasing to God, and which will be most assuredly accompanied by his gracious energy, we may judge from what he says of his faithful servant Abraham; 'I know him that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.'

But religion is the only thing in which we seem to look for the end, without making use of the means; and yet it would not be more surprising if we were to expect that our children should become artists and scholars without being bred to arts and languages, than it is to look for a christian world, without a christian education.

The noblest objects can yield no delight if there be not in the mind a disposition to relish them. There must be a congruity between the mind and the object, in order to produce any capacity of enjoyment. To the mathematician, demonstration is pleasure; to the philosopher, the study of nature; to the voluptuary, the gratification of his appetite; to the poet, the pleasures of the imagination. These objects they each respectively pursue, as pleasures adapted to that part of their nature which they have been accustomed to indulge and cultivate.

Now as men will be apt to act consistently with their general views and habitual tendencies, would it not be absurd to expect that the philosopher should look for his sovereign good at a ball, or the sensualist in the pleasures of intellect or piety? None of these ends are answerable to the general views of the respective pursuer; they are not correspondent to his ideas; they are not commensurate to his aims. The

sublimest pleasures can afford little gratification where a taste for them has not been previously formed. A clown, who should hear a scholar or an artist talk of the delights of a library, a picture gallery, or a concert, could not guess at the nature of the pleasures they afford; nor would his being introduced to them give him much clearer ideas; because he would bring to them an eye blind to proportion, an understanding new to science, and an ear deaf to harmony.

Shall we expect then, since men can only become scholars by diligent labour, that they shall become Christians by mere chance! Shall we be surprised if those do not fulfil the offices of religion who are not trained to an acquaintance with them? And will it not be obvious that it must be some other thing besides the abstruseness of creeds, which has tended to make Christianity unfashionable, and piety obsolete?

It probably will not be disputed, that in no age have the passions of our high-born youth been so early freed from all curb and restraint. In no age has the paternal authority been so contemptuously treated, or every species of subordination so disdainfully trampled upon. In no age have simple, and natural, and youthful pleasures so early lost their power over the mind; nor was ever one great secret of virtue and happiness, the secret of being *cheaply pleased*, so little understood.

A taste for costly, or artificial, or tumultuous pleasures cannot be gratified, even by their most sedulous pursuers, at every moment; and what wretched management is it in the economy of human happiness, so to contrive, as that the enjoyment shall be rare and difficult, and the intervals long and languid! Whereas real and unadulterated pleasures occur perpetually to him who cultivates a taste for truth and nature, and science and virtue. But these simple and tranquil enjoyments cannot but be insipid to him whose passions have been prematurely excited by agitating pleasures, or whose taste has been depraved by such as are debasing and frivolous; for it is of more consequence to virtue than some good people are willing to allow, to preserve the taste pure and the judgment sound. A vitiated intellect has no small connexion with depraved morals.

Since amusements of some kind are necessary to all ages (I speak now with an eye to mere human enjoyment) why should it be an object of early care, to keep a due proportion of them in reserve for those future seasons of life in which there will be so much more needed? Why should there not, even for this purpose, be adopted a system of salutary restriction, to be used by parents toward their children, by instructors toward their pupils, and in the progress of life by each man toward himself? In a word, why should not the same reasons, which have induced us to tether inferior animals, suggest the expediency of, in some sort, tethering man also? Since nothing but experience seems to teach him, that if he be allowed to anticipate his future possessions, and trample all the flowery fields of real, as well as those of imaginary and artificial enjoyment, he not only endures present disgust, but defaces and destroys all the rich materials of his future happiness; and leaves himself, for the rest of his life, nothing but ravaged fields and barren stubble.

But the great and radical defect, and that which comes more immediately within the present design, seems to be, that in general the characteristical principles of Christianity are not early and strongly infused into the mind: that religion, if taught at all, is rather taught incidentally, as a thing of subordinate value, than as the leading principle of human actions, the great animating spring of human conduct. Were the high influential principles of the christian religion anxiously and early inculcated, we should find that those lapses from virtue, to which passion and temptation afterwards too frequently solicit, would be more easily recoverable.

For though the evil propensities of fallen nature, and the bewitching allurements of pleasure, will too often seduce even those of the best education into devious paths, yet we shall find that men will seldom be *incurably* wicked unless that internal corruption of principle has taken place, which teaches them how to justify iniquity by argument, and to confirm evil conduct by the sanction of false reasoning; or where there is a total ignorance of the very nature and design of Christianity, which ignorance can only exist where early religious instruction has been entirely neglected.

The errors occasioned by the violence of passion may be reformed, but systematic wickedness will be only fortified by time; and no decrease of strength, no decay of appetite, can weaken the power of a pernicious principle. He who deliberately commits a bad action, puts himself indeed out of the path of safety; but he who adopts a false principle, not only throws himself into the enemy's country, but burns the ships, breaks the bridge, cuts off every retreat by which he might one day hope to return to his own.

It is remarkable that in almost all the celebrated characters of whom we have an account in former periods of the English history, we find a serious attention to religion discovering itself at the close of life, however the preceding years might have been misemployed. We meet with striking examples of this kind amongst statesmen, amongst philosophers, amongst men of business, and even amongst men of pleasure. We have on record the dying sentiments of *Walsingham*, of *Smith*, of *Hutton*, the favourites of queen Elizabeth. We see, in the following reign, *Raleigh* supporting himself by religion under the severity of his fate; *Bacon* seeking comfort in devotion amidst his disgraces; and *Wotton*, after having been ambassador to almost every court in Europe, taking refuge at last in a pious retirement at Eton college. But to enumerate instances would be endless, when, in fact, we scarcely discover a single instance to the contrary.—In those times it was considered as a matter even of common decency, that advanced age should possess, at least, the exterior of piety; and we have every reason to believe that an irreligious old man would have been pointed at as a sort of monster.

But is this the case in our day? Do we now commonly perceive in any rank that disposition

to close life religiously, which at the period to which I have alluded was so general even in the fashionable world? I fear it is so far the reverse that if Pope had been our contemporary, and were now composing his famous Ethical Poem, he could not hazard even that light remark,

That beads and prayer-books are the toys of age,

without grossly violating probability.

But to what cause are we to ascribe that superannuated impiety, which seems to distinguish the present from the preceding generations? Is it not chiefly owing to the neglect of early religious instruction, which now for so many years has been gaining ground among us? In the last age even public schools were places, no less of christian than of classical instruction: and the omission of religious worship, whether public or private, was deemed, at least, as censurable a fault as the neglect of a lesson.—Parents had not yet imbibed that maxim of modern refinement, that religious instruction ought to be deferred until the mind be capable of choosing for itself—that is, until it be so preoccupied as to leave neither room nor relish for the articles of Christian faith, or the rules of Christian obedience. The advice of the wise king of Israel of 'training up a child in the way he should go,' had not then become obsolete; and the truth of his assertion in the remaining clause of the passage, was happily realized in the sincere, though late return of many a wanderer.

Even in the very laws of our nature, there seems to be a gracious provision for promoting the final efficacy of early religious instruction. When the old man has no longer any relish left for his accustomed gratifications, in what way does he endeavour to fill up the void? Is it not by sending back his thoughts to his early years, and endeavouring to live over again in idea those scenes which, in this distant retrospect, appear far more delightful than he had found them to be at the actual period of enjoyment? Disgusted at every thing around him, and disappointed in those pursuits to which he had once looked forward with all the ardour of hope; but to which he now feels he has sacrificed in vain, his quiet, and perhaps his integrity, he takes a pensive pleasure in reviewing the season when his mind was yet cheerful and innocent; and even the very cares and anxieties of that happy period appear to him now, in a more captivating form than any pleasures he can yet hope to enjoy. What then is more natural, I had almost said more certain, than that if the principles of religion were inculcated, and the feelings of devotion excited in his mind in that most susceptible season of life, they should now revive as well as other contemporary impressions, and present themselves in a point of view, the more interesting, because, while all other instances of youthful occupation can be only *recollected*, these may be called up into fresh existence, and be enjoyed even more perfectly than before.

The defects of memory also, which old age induces, will, in this instance, assist rather than obstruct. It almost universally happens, that the more recent transactions are those soonest forgotten, while the events of youth and childhood are remembered with accuracy. If therefore pious principles have been implanted, they will, even by the course of nature, be recollected, while those things which most contribute to hinder their growth are swept from the memory. What a powerful encouragement then does this consideration afford! or rather what an indispensable obligation does it lay upon parents, to store the minds of their children with the seeds of piety! And on the other hand, what unnatural barbarity is it, irretrievably to shut up the last refuge of the wretched, by a neglect of this duty; and to render it impossible for those who had 'stood all the day idle,' to be called (at least without a miracle) even at the eleventh hour.

No one surely will impute to bigotry or enthusiasm, the lamenting, or even remonstrating against such desperate negligence; nor can it be deemed illiberal to inquire, whether even a still greater evil does not exist? I mean, whether pernicious principles are not as strenuously inculcated as those of real virtue and happiness are discountenanced? Whether young men are not expressly taught to take custom and fashion as the ultimate and exclusive standard by which to try their principles and to weigh their actions! Whether some idol of false honour be not consecrated and set up for them to worship? Whether, even among the better sort, reputation be not held out as a motive of sufficient energy to produce virtue, in a world, where yet the greatest vices are every day practised openly, without at all obstructing the reception of those who practise them into the best company? Whether resentment be not ennobled; and pride, and many other passions, erected into honourable virtues—virtues not less repugnant to the genius and spirit of Christianity than obvious and gross vices? Will it be thought impertinent to inquire if the awful doctrines of a perpetually present Deity, and a future righteous judgment, are early impressed and lastingly engraved on the hearts and consciences of our high-born youth?

Perhaps if there be any one particular in which we fall remarkably below the politer nations of antiquity, it is in that part of education which has a reference to purity of mind and the discipline of the heart.

The great secret of religious education, which seems banished from the present practice, consists in training young men to an habitual interior restraint, an early government of the affections, and a course of self-controul over those tyrannizing inclinations which have so natural a tendency to enslave the human heart. Without this habit of moral restraint, which is one of the fundamental laws of christian virtue, though men may, from natural temper, often *do* good, yet it is impossible that they should ever *be* good. Without the vigorous exercise of this controling principle, the best dispositions and the most amiable qualities will go but a little way towards establishing a virtuous character. For the best dispositions will be easily overcome by the concurrence of passion and temptation, in a heart where the passions have not been accustomed to this wholesome discipline: and the most amiable qualities will but

more easily betray their possessor, unless the heart be fortified by repeated acts and long habits of resistance.

In this, as in various other instances, we may blush at the superiority of pagan instruction. Were the Roman youth taught to imagine themselves always in the awful presence of Cato, in order to habituate them betimes to suppress base sentiments, and to excite such as were generous and noble? and should not the christian youth be continually reminded, that a greater than Cato is here? Should they not be trained to the habit of acting under the constant impression, that *He* to whom they must one day be accountable for intentions, as well as words and actions, is witness to the one as well as the other? that he not only is 'about their path,' but 'understands their very thoughts.'

Were the disciples of a pagan* leader taught that it was a motive sufficient to compel their obedience to any rule, whether they liked it or not, that it had the authority of their teacher's name? Were the bare words, *the master hath said it*, sufficient to settle all disputes, and to subdue all reluctance? And shall the scholars of a more Divine teacher, who have a code of laws written by God himself, be contented with a lower rule, or abide by a meaner authority? And is any argument drawn from human considerations likely to operate more forcibly on a dependent being, than that simple but grand assertion, with which so many of the precepts of our religion are introduced—Because, THUS SAITH THE LORD?

It is doing but little, in the infusion of first principles, to obtain the bare assent of the understanding to the existence of one Supreme power, unless the heart and affections go along with the conviction, by our conceiving of that power as intimately connected with ourselves. A feeling temper will be but little affected with the cold idea of a *geometrical* God, as the excellent Pascal expresses it, who merely adjusts all the parts of matter, and keeps the elements in order. Such a mind will be but little moved, unless he be taught to consider his Maker under the interesting and endearing representation which revealed religion gives of him. That 'God is,' will be to him rather an alarming than a consolatory idea; till he be persuaded of the subsequent proposition, that 'he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' Nay, if natural religion *does* even acknowledge one awful attribute, that 'God is just,' it will only increase the terror of a tender conscience, till it be learned from the fountain of truth, that he is 'the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.'

But if the great sanctions of our religion are not deeply engraven on the heart, where shall we look for any other adequate curb to the fiery spirit of youth? For, let the elements be ever so kindly mixed in a human composition, let the natural temper be ever so amiable, still whenever a man ceases to think himself an accountable being, what motive can he have for resisting a strong temptation to a present good, when he has no dread that he shall thereby forfeit a greater future good?

* Pythagoras.

It may perhaps be objected, that this deep sense of religion would interfere with the general purpose of education, which is designed to qualify men for the business of human life, and not train up a race of monks and ascetics.

There is however so little real solidity in this specious objection, that I am firmly persuaded, that if religious principles were more deeply impressed on the heart, even the things of this world would be much better carried on. For where are we to look for all the qualities; which constitute the man of business; for punctuality, diligence, and application, for such attention in doing every thing in its proper day (the great hinge on which business turns) as among men of principle? Economy of time, truth in observing his word, never daring to deceive or to disappoint—these form the very essence of an active and an useful character; and for these, to whom shall we most naturally look? Who is so likely to be 'slothful in business' as he who is 'fervent in spirit?' And will not he be most regular in dealing with men, who is most diligent in 'serving the Lord?'

But, it may be said, allowing that Religion does not necessarily spoil a man of *business*, yet it would effectually defeat those accomplishments, and counteract that fine breeding, which essentially constitute the *gentleman*.

This again is so far from being a natural consequence, that, supposing all the other real advantages of parts, education, and society, to be equally taken into the account, there is no doubt but that, in point of true politeness, a real Christian would beat the world at his own weapons, the world itself being judge.

It must be confessed, that in the present corrupt state of things, there is scarcely any one contrivance for which we are more obliged to the inventions of mankind than for that politeness, as there is perhaps no screen in the world which hides so many ugly sights, yet while we allow that there never was so admirable a substitute for real goodness as good breeding, it is certain that the principles of Christianity put into action, would of themselves produce more genuine politeness than any maxims drawn from motives of human vanity or worldly convenience. If love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, patience, goodness, and meekness, may be thought instruments to produce sweetness of manners, these we are expressly told are the 'fruits of the Spirit.' If mourning with the afflicted, rejoicing with the happy; if to 'esteem others better than ourselves;' if 'to take the lowest room;' if not to seek our own;' if 'not to behave ourselves unseemly;' if 'not to speak great swelling words of vanity'—if these are amiable, engaging, and polite parts of behaviour, then would the documents of Saint Paul make as true a fine gentleman as the *courtier of Castiglione*, or even the *Letters of lord Chesterfield* himself. Then would simulation, and dissimulation, and all the nice shades and delicate gradations of passive and active deceit, be rendered superfluous; and the affections of every heart be won by a shorter and a surer way than by the elegant obliquities of this late popular preceptor, whose mischiefs have outlived his reputation; and who notwith

standing the present just declension of his fame, greatly helped, during its transient meridian, to relax the general nerve of virtue, and has left a taint upon the public morals, of which we are still sensible.

That self-abasement then, which is inseparable from true Christianity, and the external signs of which good breeding knows so well how to assume; and those charities which suggest invariable kindness to others, even in the smallest things, would if left to their natural workings, produce that gentleness which it is one great object of a polite education to imitate. They would produce it too without effort and without exertion; for being inherent in the substance, it would naturally discover itself on the surface.

For however useful the institutions of polished society may be found, yet they can never alter the eternal difference between right and wrong, or convert appearances into realities; they cannot transform decency into virtue, nor make politeness pass for principle. And the advocates for fashionable breeding should be humbled to reflect that every convention of artificial manners was adopted not to *cure*, but to *conceal*, deformity; that though the superficial civilities of elegant life tend to make this corrupt world a more tolerable place than it would be without them, yet they never will be considered as a substitute for truth, nor a commutation for virtue, by HIM who is to pass the definitive sentence on the characters of men.

Among the many prejudices which the young and the gay entertain against religion, one is, that it is the declared enemy to wit and genius. But, says one of its wittest champions,* 'piety enjoins no man to be dull:' and it will be found, on a fair inquiry, that though it cannot be denied that irreligion has had able men for its advocates, yet they have never been the *most* able. Nor can any learned profession, any department in letters or in science, produce a champion on the side of unbelief, but Christianity has a still greater name to oppose to it; *philosophers* themselves being judges.

He who studied the book of nature with a scrutiny which has scarcely been permitted to any other mortal eye, was deeply learned in the book of God.† And the ablest writer on the intellect of man, has left one of the ablest treatises *on the Reasonableness of Christianity*. This essay of Mr. Locke, on the *Human Understanding*, will stand up to latest ages, as a monument of wisdom; while Hume's posthumous work, *the Essay on Suicide*, which had excited such large expectations, has been long since forgotten.‡

Pascal has proved that as much rhetoric and logic too may be shown in defending Revelation, as in attacking it. His geometrical spirit was not likely to take up with any proofs but such as came as near to demonstration as the nature of the subject would admit. *Erasmus* in his writings on the ignorance of the monks, and the Provincial Letters on the fallacies of the Jesuits, while they exhibit as entire a freedom from bigotry, exhibit also as much pointed wit, and as much sound reasoning, as can be found in the whole mass of modern philosophy.

But while the young adopt the opinion from one class of writers, that religious men are weak men, they acquire from another class a notion that they are ridiculous. And this opinion, by mixing itself with their common notions, and deriving itself from their very amusements, is the more mischievous, as it is imbibed without suspicion, and entertained without resistance.

One common medium through which they take this false view is, those favourite works of wit and humour, so captivating to youthful imaginations, where no small part of the author's success perhaps has been owing to his dexterously introducing a pious character with so many virtues, that it is impossible not to love him; yet tinctured with so many absurdities, that it is equally impossible not to laugh at him. The reader's memory will furnish him with too many instances of what is here meant. The slightest touches of a witty malice can make the best character ridiculous. It is effected by any little awkwardness; absence of mind, an obsolete phrase, a formal pronunciation, a peculiarity of gesture. Or if such a character be brought by unsuspecting honesty, and credulous goodness, into some foolish scrape, it will stamp on him an impression of ridicule so indelible, that all his worth shall not be able to efface it; and the young, who do not always separate their ideas very carefully, shall ever after, by this early and false association, conceive of piety as having something essentially ridiculous in itself.

But one of the most infallible arts by which the inexperienced are engaged on the side of irreligion, is that popular air of candour, good-nature, and toleration, which it so invariably puts on. While sincere piety is often accused of moroseness and severity, because it cannot hear the doctrines on which it founds its eternal hopes derided without emotion; indifference and unbelief purchase the praise of candor at an easy price, because they neither suffer grief nor express indignation at hearing the most awful truths ridiculed, or the most solemn obligations set at nought. They do not engage on equal terms. The infidel appears good-humoured from his very levity; but the Christian

* Dr. South.

† Sir Isaac Newton.

‡ The Essay on Suicide was published soon after Mr. Hume's death. It might mortify his liberal mind (if matter and motion were capable of consciousness) to learn that his dying legacy, the last concentrated effect of his genius and his principles, sent from the grave as it were, by a man so justly renowned in other branches of literature, produced no sensation on the public mind. And that the precious information that every man had a right to be his own executioner, was considered as a privilege so little desirable, that it probably had not the glory of converting one *cross road* into a cemetery. It is to the credit of this country that fewer copies of this work were sold than perhaps ever was the case with a writer of so much eminence. A more impotent act of wickedness has seldom been achieved, or one which has had the glory of making fewer persons wicked or miserable. That cold and cheerless oblivion which he held out as a refuge to beings who had solaced themselves with the soothing hope of immortality, has, by a memorable retribution, overshadowed his last labour; the Essay on Suicide being already as much forgotten as he promised the best men that they themselves would be. And this favourite work became at once a prey to that forgetfulness to which he had consigned the whole human race.

cannot jest on subjects which involve his everlasting salvation.

The scoffers whom young people hear talk, and the books they hear quoted, falsely charge their own injurious opinions on Christianity and then unjustly accuse her of being the monster they have made. They dress her up with the sword of persecution in one hand, and the flames of intolerance in the other; and then ridicule the sober-minded for worshipping an idol which their misrepresentation has rendered as malignant as Moloch. In the mean-time they affect to seize on benevolence with exclusive appropriation as their own cardinal virtue, and to accuse of a bigotted cruelty that narrow spirit which points out the perils of licentiousness, and the terrors of a future account. And yet this benevolence, with all its tender mercies, is not afraid nor ashamed to endeavour at snatching away from humble piety the comfort of a present hope, and the bright prospect of a felicity that shall have no end. It does not however seem a very probable means of increasing the stock of human happiness, to plunder mankind of that principle, by the destruction of which friendship is robbed of its bond, society of its security, patience of its motive, morality of its foundation, integrity of its reward, sorrow of its consolation, life of its balm, and death of its support.*

It will not perhaps be one of the meanest advantages of a better state that, as the will shall be reformed, so the judgment shall be rectified; that 'evil shall no more be called good,' nor the 'churl liberal;' nor the plunderer of our best possession, our principles, *benevolent*. Then it will be evident that greater injury could not be done to truth, nor greater violence to language, than by attempting to wrest from Christianity that benevolence which is in fact her most appropriate and peculiar attribute. 'A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another.' If benevolence be 'good will to men,' it was that which angelic messengers were not thought too high to announce, nor a much higher being than angels too great to teach by his example, and to illustrate by his death. It was the criterion, the very watch-word as it were, by which he intended his religion and his followers should be distinguished. 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' Besides, it is the very genius of Christianity to extirpate all selfishness, on whose vacated ground benevolence naturally and necessarily plants itself.

But not to run through all the particulars which obstruct the growth of piety in young persons, I shall only name one more. They hear much declamation from the fashionable reasoners against the contracted and selfish spirit of Christianity—that it is of a sordid temper, works for pay, and looks for reward.

This jargon of French philosophy, which prates of pure disinterested goodness acting for its own sake, and equally despising punishment and disdaining recompence, indicates as little knowledge of human nature as of Christian revelation, when it addresses man as a being made up of pure intellect, without any mixture of passions, and who can be made happy without hope, and virtuous without fear. These philosophers affect to be more independent than Moses, more disinterested than Christ himself; for 'Moses had respect to the recompence of reward;' and Christ 'endured the cross and despised the shame, for the joy that was set before him.'

A creature hurried away by the impulse of some impetuous inclination, is not likely to be restrained (if he be restrained at all) by a cold reflection on the beauty of virtue. If the dread of offending God, and incurring his everlasting displeasure, cannot stop him, how shall a weaker motive do it? When we see that the powerful sanctions which Religion holds out are too often an ineffectual curb; to think of attaining the same end by feebler means, is as if one should expect to make a watch go the better by breaking the main-spring; nay, as absurd as if the philosopher who inculcates the doctrine should undertake, with one of his fingers, to lift an immense weight which had resisted the powers of the crane and lever.

On calm and temperate spirits indeed, in the hour of retirement, in the repose of the passions, in the absence of temptation, virtue does seem to be her own adequate reward: and very lovely are the fruits she bears in preserving health, credit, and fortune. But on how few will this principle act! and even on them how often will its operation be suspended? and though virtue for her own sake might have captivated a few hearts, which almost seem cast in a natural mould of goodness, yet no motive could at all times, be so likely to restrain even these, especially under the pressure of temptation) as his simple assertion—*For all this, God will bring thee unto judgment.*

It is the beauty of our religion, that it is not held out exclusively to a few select spirits; that it is not an object of speculation, or an exercise of ingenuity, but a *rule of life* suited to every condition, capacity, and temper. It is the glory of the Christian religion to *be*, what it was the glory of every ancient philosophic system *not* to be, *the religion of the people;* and that which constitutes its characteristic value, is its suitableness to the genius, condition, and necessities of mankind.

For with whatsoever obscurities it has pleased God to shadow some parts of his written word, yet he has graciously ordered that whatever is necessary should be perspicuous also: and though, as to his adorable essence, 'clouds and darkness are round about him;' yet these are not the medium through which he has left us to discover our duty. In this, as in all other points, revealed religion has a decided superiority over all the ancient systems of philosophy, which were always in many respects impracticable

* Young persons are too liable to be misled by that extreme disingenuousness of the new philosophers, when writing on every thing and person connected with revealed religion. These authors often quote satirical poets as grave historical authorities; for instance, because Juvenal has said that the Jews were so narrow minded that they refused to show a spring of water, or the right road, to an enquiring traveller who was not of their religion, I make little doubt but many an ignorant free-thinker has actually gone away with the belief, that such good-natured acts of information were actually forbidden by the law of Moses.

and extravagant, because not framed from observations drawn from a perfect knowledge 'of what was in man.' Whereas the whole scheme of the Gospel is accommodated to real human nature; laying open its mortal disease, presenting its only remedy; exhibiting rules of conduct often difficult, indeed, but never impossible; and where the rule was so high that the practicability seemed desperate, holding out a living pattern, to elucidate the doctrine and to illustrate the precept; offering every where the clearest notions of what we have to hope, and what we have to fear; the strongest injunctions of what we are to believe, and the most explicit directions of what we are to do; with the most encouraging offers of Divine assistance for strengthening our faith and quickening our obedience.

In short, whoever examines the wants of his own heart, and the appropriate assistance which the Gospel furnishes, will find them to be two tallies which exactly correspond—an internal evidence, stronger perhaps than any other, of the truth of Revelation.

This is the religion with which the ingenuous hearts of youth should be warmed, and by which their minds, while pliant, should be directed. This will afford a 'lamp to their paths,' stronger, steadier, brighter, than the feeble and uncertain glimmer of a cold and comfortless philosophy.

Other symptoms of the decline of Christianity—No family religion—Corrupt or negligent example of superiors—The self-denying and evangelical virtues held in contempt—Neglect of encouraging and promoting religion among servants.

It was by no means the design of the present undertaking to make a general invective on the corrupt state of manners, or even to animadvert on the conduct of the higher ranks, but inasmuch as the corruption of that conduct, and the depravation of those manners appear to be a natural consequence of the visible decline of religion; and as operating in its turn, as a cause, on the inferior orders of society.

Of the other obvious causes which contribute to this decline of morals, little will be said. Nor is the present a romantic attempt to restore the simplicity of primitive manners. This is too literally an age of gold, to expect that it should be so in the poetical and figurative sense. It would be unjust and absurd not to form our opinions and expectations from the present general state of society. And it would argue great ignorance of the corruption which commerce, and conquest, and riches, and arts necessarily introduce into a state, to look for the same sober-mindedness, simplicity, and purity among the *dregs of Romulus*, as the severe and simple manners of elder Rome presented.

But though it would be an attempt of desperate hardihood, to controvert that maxim of the witty bard, that

> To mend the world's a vast design;

a popular aphorism, by the way, which has done no little mischief, inasmuch, as under the mask of hopelessness it suggests an indolent acquiescence; yet to make the best of the times in which we live; to fill up the measure of our own actual, particular, and individual duties; and to take care that the age shall not be the worse for our having been cast into it, seems to be the bare dictate of common probity, and not a romantic flight of impracticable perfection.

Is it then so very chimerical to imagine that the benevolent can be sober-minded? Is it romantic to desire that the good should be consistent? Is it absurd to fancy that what has once been practised should not now be impracticable?

It is impossible not to help regretting that it should be the general temper of many of the leading persons of that age which arrogates to itself the glorious character of the *age of benevolence*, to be kind, considerate, and compassionate, every where rather than at home; that the rich and the fashionable should be zealous in promoting religious as well as charitable institutions abroad, and yet discourage every thing which looks like religion in their own families; that they should be at a considerable expense in instructing the poor at a distance, and yet discredit piety among their own servants—those more immediate objects of every man's attention, whom Providence has enabled to keep any; and for whose conduct he will be finally accountable, inasmuch as he may have helped to corrupt it.

Is there any degree of pecuniary bounty without doors which can counteract the mischief of a wrong example at home, or atone for that infectious laxity of principle which spreads corruption wherever its influence extends? Is not he the best benefactor to society who sets the best example, and who does not only the most good, but the least evil? Will not that man, however liberal, very imperfectly promote virtue in the world at large, who neglects to disseminate its principles within the immediate sphere of his own personal influence, by a correct conduct and a blameless behaviour? Can a generous but profligate person atone by his purse for the disorders of his life? Can he expect a blessing on his bounties, while he defeats their effect by a profane or even a careless conversation?

In moral as well as in political treatises, it is often asserted that it is a great evil to do no good; but it has not been perhaps enough insisted on, that it is a great deal to do no evil. This species of goodness is not ostentatious enough for popular declamation; and the value of this abstinence from vice is perhaps not well understood but by Christians, because it wants the ostensible brilliancy of actual performance.

But as the *principles* of Christianity are in no great repute, so their concomitant *qualities*, the evangelical virtues, are proportionably disesteemed. Let it, however, be remembered, that those secret habits of self-control, those interior and unobtrusive virtues, which excite no astonishment, kindle no emulation, and extort no praise, are at the same time the most difficult, and the most sublime; and if Christianity be true, will be the most graciously accepted by

Him who witnesses the secret combat and the silent victory: while the splendid deeds which have the world for their witness, and immortal fame for their reward, shall perhaps cost him who achieved them less than it costs a conscientious Christian to subdue one irregular inclination: a conquest which the world will never know, and, if it did, would probably despise.

Though great actions, performed on human motives, are permitted by the Supreme Disposer to be equally beneficial to society with such as are performed on purer principles; yet it is an affecting consideration, that, at the final adjustment of accounts, the politician who *raised* a state, or the hero who *preserved* it, may miss of that favour of God which, if it was not his motive, will certainly not be his reward. And it is awful to reflect, as we visit the monuments justly raised by public gratitude, or the statues properly erected by well-earned admiration; it is awful, I say, to reflect on what may now be the unalterable condition of the illustrious object of these deserved but unavailing honours; and that he who has saved a state may have lost his own soul!

A christian life seems to consist of two things almost equally difficult; the adoption of good habits, and the excision of such as are evil. No one sets out on a religious course with a stock of native innocence, or actual freedom from sin; for there is no such state in human life. The natural heart is not, as has been too often supposed, a blank paper, whereon the Divine Spirit has nothing to do but to stamp characters of goodness. No! many blots are to be erased, many defilements are to be cleansed, as well as fresh impressions to be made.

The vigilant Christian, therefore, who acts with an eye to the approbation of his Maker, rather than to that of mankind; to a future account, rather than to present glory; will find that diligently to cultivate the 'unweeded garden' of his own heart; to mend the soil; to clear the ground of indigenous vices, by practising the painful business of extirpation, will be that part of his duty which will cost him most labour, and bring him least credit: while the fair flower of one showy action, produced with little trouble, and of which the very pleasure is reward enough, shall gain him more praise than the eradication of the rankest weeds which overrun the natural heart.

But the Gospel judges not after the manner of men; for it never fails to make the abstinent virtues a previous step to the right performance of the operative ones; and the relinquishing what is wrong to be a necessary prelude to the performance of what is right. It makes 'ceasing to do evil' the indispensable preliminary to 'learning to do well.' It continually suggests that something is to be laid aside, as well as to be practised. We must 'hate vain thoughts' before we can 'love God's law.' We must lay aside malice and hypocrisy,' to *enable* us 'to receive the engrafted word.' Having 'a conscience void of offence;'—'abstaining from fleshly lusts;'—'bring every thought into obedience;'—these are actions, or rather negations, which, though they never will obtain immortality from the chisel of the statuary, the declamation of the historian, or the panegyric of the poet, will, however, be 'had in everlasting remembrance,' when the works of the statuary, the historian, and the poet will be no more.

And, for our encouragement, it is observable that a more difficult Christian virtue generally involves an easier one. A habit of self-denial in permitted pleasures, easily induces a victory over such as are unlawful. And to sit loose to our own possessions, necessarily includes an exemption from coveting the possessions of others: and so on of the rest.

Will it be difficult then to trace back to that want of early restraint noticed in the preceding chapter, that licence of behaviour which, having been indulged in youth, afterwards reigned uncontrolled in families: and which having infected education in its first springs, taints all the streams of domestic virtue? And will it be thought strange that that same want of religious principle which corrupted our children, should corrupt our servants?

We scarcely go into any company without hearing some invective against the increased profligacy of this order of men; and the remark is made with as great an air of astonishment, as if the cause of the complaint were not as visible as the truth of it. It would be endless to point out instances in which the increased dissipation of their *betters* (as they are oddly called) has contributed to the growth of this evil. But it comes only within the immediate design of the present undertaking to insist on the single circumstance of the almost total extermination of religion in fashionable families, as a cause adequate of itself to any consequence which depraved morals can produce.

Is there not a degree of injustice in persons who express strong indignation at those crimes which crowd our prisons, and furnish our incessant executions, and who yet discourage not an internal principle of vice: since those crimes are nothing more than that principle put into action? And it is no less absurd than cruel, in such of the great as lead disorderly lives, to expect to prevent vice by the laws they make to restrain or punish it, while their own example is a perpetual source of temptation to commit it. If, by their own practice, they demonstrate that they think a vicious life is the only happy one, with what colour of justice can they inflict penalties on others, who, by acting on the same principle, expect the same indulgence!

And indeed it is somewhat unreasonable to expect very high degrees of virtue and probity from a class of people whose whole life, after they are admitted into dissipated families, is one continued counteraction of the principles in which they have probably been bred.

When a poor youth is transplanted from one of those excellent institutions which do honor to the present age, and give some hope of reforming the next, into the family of his noble benefactor in town, who has, perhaps, provided liberally for his instruction in the country; what must be his astonishment at finding the manner of life to which he is introduced diametrically opposite to that life to which he has been taught that salvation is alone annexed! He has been taught that it was his bounden duty to be de-

voutly thankful for his own scanty meal, perhaps of barley-bread; yet he sees his noble lord sit down every day,

Not to a dinner, but a hecatomb:

to a repast of which every element is plundered, and every climate impoverished; for which nature is ransacked, and art is exhausted; without even the formal ceremony of a slight acknowledgment. It will be lucky for the master, if his servant does not happen to know that even the pagans never sat down to a repast without making a libation to their deities; and that the Jews did not eat a little fruit, or drink a cup of water, without an expression of devout thankfulness.

Next to the law of God, he has been taught to reverence the law of the land, and to respect an act of parliament next to a text of Scripture: yet he sees his honourable protector, publicly in his own house, engaged in the evening in playing at a game expressly prohibited by the laws, and against which perhaps he himself had been assisting in the day to pass an act.

While the contempt of religion was confined to wits and philosophers, the effect was not so sensibly felt. But we cannot congratulate the ordinary race of mortals on their emancipation from old prejudices, or their indifference to sacred usages; as it is not at all visible that the world is become happier in proportion as it is become more enlightened. We might rejoice more in the boasted diffusion of light and freedom, were it not apparent that bankruptcies are grown more frequent, robberies more common, divorces more numerous, and forgeries more extensive—that more rich men die by their own hand, and more poor men by the hand of the executioner—than when Christianity was practised by the vulgar, and countenanced, at least, by the great.

It is not to be regretted, therefore, while the affluent are encouraging so many admirable schemes for promoting religion among the children of the poor, that they do not like to *perpetuate* the principle, by encouraging it in their own children and their servants also? Is it not a pity, since these last are so moderately furnished with the good things of this life, to rob them of that bright reversion, the bare hope of which is a counterpoise to all the hardships they undergo here—especially since by diminishing this future hope, we shall not be likely to add to their present usefulness?

Still allowing, what has been already granted, that absolute infidelity is not the reigning evil, and that servants will perhaps be more likely to see religion neglected than to hear it ridiculed—would it not be a meritorious kindness in families of a better stamp, to furnish them with more opportunities of learning and practising their duty? Is it not impolitic indeed, as well as unkind, to refuse them any means of having impressed on their consciences the operative principles of Christianity? It is but little, barely not to *oppose* their going to church, not to *prevent* their doing their duty at home, their opportunities of doing both ought to be facilitated, by giving them, at certain seasons, as few employments as possible that may interfere with both. Even when religion is by pretty general consent banished from our families at home, that only furnishes a stronger reason why our families should not be banished from religion in the churches.

But if these opportunities are not made easy and convenient to them, their superiors have no right to expect from them a zeal so far transcending their own, as to induce them to surmount difficulties for the sake of duty. Religion is never once represented in Scripture as a light attainment; it is never once illustrated by an easy, a quiet, or an indolent allegory.

On the contrary, it is exhibited under the active figure of a combat, a race; something expressive of exertion, activity, progress. And yet many are unjust enough to think that this warfare can be fought, though they themselves are perpetually weakening the vigour of the combatant; this race be run, though they are incessantly obstructing the progress of him who runs by some hard and interfering command. That our compassionate Judge, who 'knoweth whereof we are made, and remembereth that we are but dust,' is particularly touched with the feeling of *their* infirmities, can never be doubted; but what portion of forgiveness he will extend to those who lay on their virtue, hard burdens 'too heavy for them to bear' who shall say?

To keep an immortal being in a state of spiritual darkness, is a positive disobedience to *His* law, who when he bestowed the Bible, no less than when he created the material world, said *Let there be light.* It were well, both for the advantage of master and servant, that the latter should have the doctrines of the Gospel frequently impressed on his heart; that his conscience should be made familiar with a system which offers such clear and intelligible propositions of moral duty The striking interrogation, 'how shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' will perhaps operate as forcibly on an uncultivated mind, as the most eloquent essay to prove that man is not an accountable being. That once credited promise, that 'they who have done well shall go into everlasting life,' will be more grateful to the spirit of a plain man, than that more elegant and disinterested sentiment, that *virtue is its own reward.* That, 'he that walketh uprightly walketh surely,' is not on the whole a dangerous, or a misleading maxim. And 'well done, good and faithful servant! I will make thee ruler over many things,' though offensive to the liberal spirit of philosophic dignity, is a comfortable support to humble and suffering piety. That 'we should do to others as we would they should do to us,' is a portable measure of human duty, always at hand, as always referring to something within himself, not amiss for a poor man to carry constantly about with him, who has neither time nor learning to search for a better. It is an universal and compendious law, so universal as to include the whole compass of social obligation; so compendious as to be inclosed in so short and plain an aphorism, that the dullest mind cannot misapprehend, nor the weakest memory forget it. It is convenient for bringing out on all the ordinary occasions of life. We need not say, 'who shall go up to heaven and bring it unto

us, for this word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.'*

For it is a very valuable part of the gospel of Christ, that though it is an entire and perfect system in its design! though it exhibits one great plan from which complete trains of argument, and connected schemes of reasoning may be deduced; yet in compassion to the multitude, for whom this benevolent institution was in a good measure designed, and who could not have comprehended a long chain of propositions, or have embraced remote deductions, the most important truths of doctrine, and the most essential documents of virtue, are detailed in single maxims, and comprised in short sentences; independent of themselves, yet making a necessary part of a consummate whole; from a few of which principles the whole train of human virtues has been deduced, and many a perfect body of ethics has been framed.

If it be thought wonderful, that from so few letters of the alphabet, so few figures of arithmetic, so few notes in music, such endless combinations should have been produced in their respective arts how far more beautiful would it be to trace the whole circle of morals thus growing out of a few elementary principles of gospel truth.

All Seneca's arguments against the fear of death never yet reconciled one reader to its approach half so effectually as the humble believer is reconciled to it by that simple persuasion, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.'

While the modern philosopher is extending the boundaries of human knowledge, by undertaking to prove that matter is eternal; or enlarging the stock of human happiness, by demonstrating the extinction of spirit—it can do no harm to an unlettered man to believe, that 'heaven and earth shall pass away, but God's word shall not pass away.' While the former is indulging the profitable inquiry why the Deity made the world so late, or why he made it at all, it will not hurt the latter to believe that 'in the beginning God made the world,' and that in the end 'he shall judge it in righteousness.'

While the liberal scholar is usefully studying the law of nature and of nations, let him rejoice that his more illiterate brother possesses the plain conviction that 'love is the fulfilling of the law'—that 'love worketh no ill to his neighbour.' And let him be persuaded that he himself, though he know all Tully's Offices by heart, may not have acquired a more feeling and operative sentiment than is conveyed to the common Christian in the rule to 'bear each other's burthen.' While the wit is criticising the creed, he will be no loser by encouraging his dependants to keep the commandments; since a few such simple propositions as the above furnish a more practical and correct rule of life than can be gleaned from all the volumes of ancient philosophy, justly eminent as many of them are for wisdom and purity. For though they abound with passages of true sublimity, and sentiments of great moral beauty, yet the result is naturally defective, the conclusions necessarily contradictory.—This was no fault of the author, but of the system. The vision was acute, but the light was dim. The sharpest sagacity could not distinguish spiritual objects, in the twilight of natural religion, with that accuracy with which they are now discerned by every common Christian, in the diffusion of gospel light.

* Deut. xxx. 11 and 12

And whether it be that what depraves the principle darkens the intellect also, certain it is that an uneducated serious Christian reads his Bible with a clearness of intelligence, with an intellectual comment which no sceptic or mere worldling ever attains. The former has not prejudged the cause he is examining. He is not often led by his passions, still more rarely by his interest, to resist his convictions. While the 'secret of the Lord is (obviously) with them that fear him,' the mind of them who fear him *not*, is generally prejudiced by a retaining fee from the world, from their passions or their pride, before they enter on the inquiry.

With what consistency can the covetous man embrace a religion which so pointedly forbids him to lay up treasures on earth?' How will the man of spirit, as the world is pleased to call the duellist, relish a religion which allows not 'the sun to go down upon his wrath?' How can the ambitious struggle for 'a kingdom which is not in this world, and embrace a faith which commands him to lay down his crown at the feet of another?' How should the professed wit or the mere philosopher adopt a system which demands in a lofty tone of derision, 'Where is the scribe? Where is the wise? Where is the disputer of this world?' How will the self-satisfied Pharisee endure a religion which, while it peremptorily demands from him every useful action, and every right exertion, will not permit him to rest his hope of salvation on their performance? He whose affections are voluntarily riveted to the present world, will not much delight in a scheme whose avowed principles is to set him above it. The obvious consequence of these 'hard sayings,' is illustrated by daily instances. 'Have any of the rulers believed on him?' is a question not confined to the first age of his appearance. Had the most enlightened philosophers of the most polished nations, collected all the scattered wit and learning of the world into one point in order to invent a religion for the salvation of mankind, the doctrine of the cross is perhaps precisely the thing they would never have hit upon: precisely the thing which, being offered to them, they would reject. The intellectual pride of the philosopher relished it as little as the carnal pride of the Jew; for it flattered human wit no more than it gratified human grandeur. The pride of great acquirements, and of great wealth, equally obstructs the reception of divine truth into the heart; and whether the natural man be called upon to part either from 'great possessions,' or 'high imaginations,' he equally goes away sorrowing.

CHAP. V.

The negligent conduct of Christians no real objection against Christianity.—The reason why

its effects are not more manifest to worldly men, is because believers do not lead Christian lives. Professors differ but little in their practice from unbelievers. Even real Christians are too diffident and timid, and afraid of acting up to their principles.—The absurdity of the charge commonly brought against religious people, that they are too strict.

It is, an objection frequently brought against Christianity, that if it exhibited so perfect a scheme, if its influences were as strong, if its effects were as powerful, as its friends pretend, it must have produced more visible consequences in the reformation of mankind. This is not the place fully to answer this objection, which (like all the other cavils against our religion) continues to be urged just as if it never had been answered.

That vice and immorality prevail in no small degree in countries professing Christianity, we need not go out of our own to be convinced. But that this is the case only because this benign principle is not suffered to operate in its full power, will be no less obvious to all who are sincere in their inquiries: For if we allow (and who that examines impartially can help allowing) that it is the natural tendency of Christianity to make men better, then it must be the aversion from receiving it, and not the fault of the principle, which prevents them from becoming so.

Those who are acquainted with the effects which Christianity actually produced in the first ages of the church, when it was received in its genuine purity, and when it did operate without obstruction, from its professors at least, will want no oth r proof of its inherent power and efficacy. At that period, its most decided and industrious enemy, the emperor Julian, could recommend the manners of Gallileans to the imitation of his pagan high priests; though he himself, at the same time, was doing every thing which the most inveterate malice, sharpened by the acutest wit, and backed by the most absolute power could devise, to discredit their doctrines.

Nor would the efficacy of Christianity be less visible now in influencing the conduct of its professors, if its principles were heartily and sincerely received. They would, were they of the true genuine cast operate on the conduct so effectually, that we should see morals and manners growing out of principles, as we see other consequences grow out of their proper and natural causes. Let but this great spring have its unobstructed play, and there would be little occasion to declaim against this excess or that enormity. If the same skill and care which are employed in curing symptoms, were vigorously levelled at the internal principle of the disease, the moral health would feel the benefit. If that attention which is bestowed in lopping the redundant and unsightly branches, were devoted to the cultivation of a sound and uncorrupt root, the effect of his labour would soon be discovered by the excellence of the fruits.

For though, even in the highest possible exertion of religious principle, and the most diligent practice of all its consequential train of virtues, man would still find evil propensities enough, in his fallen nature, to make it necessary that he should counteract them by keeping alive his diligence after higher attainments, and to quicken his aspirations after a better state; yet the prevailing temper would be in general right; the will would be in a great measure rectified; and the heart, feeling, and acknowledging its disease, would apply itself diligently to the only remedy. Thus though even the best men have infirmities enough to deplore, and commit sins enough to keep them deeply humble, and feel more sensibly than others the imperfections of that vessel in which their heavenly treasure is hid, they however have the internal consolation of knowing that they shall have to do with a merciful Father, who 'despiseth not the sighing of the contrite heart, nor the desire of such as be sorrowful,' who has been witness to all their struggles against sin, and to whom they can appeal with Peter for the sincerity of their desires —'Lord! Thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love Thee.'

All the heavy charges which have been brought against religion have been taken from the abuses of it. In every other instance, the injustice of this proceeding would be notorious: but there is a general want of candour in the judgment of men on this subject, which we do not find them exercise on other occasions; that of throwing the fault of the erring or ignorant professor on the profession itself.

It does not derogate from the honourable profession of arms, that there are cowards and braggarts in the army. If any man lose his estate by the chicanery of an attorney, or his health by the blunder of a physician, it is commonly said that the one was a disgrace to his business, and the other was ignorant of it; but no one therefore concludes that law and physic are contemptible professions.

Christianity alone is obliged to bear all the obloquy incurred by the misconduct of its followers; to sustain all the reproach excited by ignorant, by fanatical, by superstitious, or hypocritical professors. But whoever accuses it of a tendency to produce the errors of these professors, must have picked up his opinion any where rather than in the New Testament; which book being the only authentic history of Christianity, is that which candour would naturally consult for information.

But as worldly and irreligious men do not draw their notions from that pure fountain, but from the polluted stream of human practice; as they form their judgment of Divine truth from the conduct of those who pretend to be enlightened by it; some charitable allowance must be made for the contempt which they entertain for Christianity, when they see what poor effects it produces in the lives of the generality of professing Christians. What do they observe there which can lead them to entertain very high ideas of the principles which give birth to such practices?

Do men of the world discover any marked, any decided difference between the conduct of nominal Christians and the rest of their neighbours who pretend to no religion at all? Do they see, in the daily lives of such, any great

abundance of those fruits by which they have heard believers are to be known? On the contrary, do they not discern in them the same anxious and unwearied pursuit after the things of the earth, as in those who do not profess to have any thought of heaven? Do not they see them labour as sedulously in the interests of a debasing and frivolous dissipation, as those who do not pretend to have any nobler object in view? Is there not the same eagerness to plunge into all sorts of follies themselves, and the same unrighteous speed in introducing their children to them, as if they had never entered into a solemn engagement to renounce them? Is there not the same self-indulgence, the same luxury, and the same passionate attachment to the things of this world in them, as is visible in those who do not look for another?

Do not thoughtless neglect, and habitual dissipation answer, as to society, all the ends of the most decided infidelity? Between the barely decent and the openly profane there is indeed this difference—That the one, by making no profession, deceives neither the world nor his own heart: while the other, by introducing himself in forms, fancies that he does something, and thanks God that 'he is not like this publican.' The one only shuts his eyes upon the danger which the other despises.

But these unfruitful professors would do well to recollect that, by a conduct so little worthy of their high calling, they not only violate the law to which they have vowed obedience, but occasion many to disbelieve or to despise it; that they are thus in a great measure accountable for the infidelity of others, and of course will have to answer for more than their own personal offences. For did they in any respect live up to the principles they profess; did they adorn the doctrines of Christianity by a life in any degree consonant to their faith; did they exhibit any thing of the 'beauty of holiness' in their daily conversation; they would then give such a demonstrative proof not only of the sincerity of their own obedience, but of the brightness of that divine light by which they profess to walk, that the most determined unbeliever would at last begin to think there must be *something* in a religion of which the effects were so visible, and the fruits so amiable; and in time be led to 'glorify,' not *them*, not the imperfect doers of these works, but 'their Father, which is in heaven.' Whereas, as things are at present carried on, the obvious conclusion must be, either that Christians do not believe in the religion they profess, or that there is no truth in the religion itself.

For will he not naturally say, that if its influences were so predominant, its consequences must be more evident! that, if the prize held out were really so bright, those who truly believed so, would surely *do* something, and *sacrifice something* to obtain it!

This effect of the carelessness of believers on the hearts of others, will probably be a heavy aggravation of their own guilt at the final reckoning:—and there is no negligent Christian can guess where the infection of his example may stop; or how remotely it may be pleaded as a palliation of the sins of others, who either may think themselves safe while they are only doing what Christian's allow themselves to do; or who may adduce a Christian's habitual violation of the divine law, as a presumptive evidence that there is no truth in Christianity.

This swells the amount of the actual mischief beyond calculation; and there is something terrible in the idea of this sort of definite evil, that the careless Christian can never know the extent of the contagion he spreads, nor the multiplied infections which *they* may communicate in *their* turn, whom *his* disorders first corrupted.

And there is this farther aggravation of his offence, that he will not only be answerable for all the positive evils of which his example is the cause; but for the omission of all the probable good which might have been called forth in others, had *his* actions been consistent with his profession. What a strong, what an almost irresistible conviction would it carry to the hearts of unbelievers, if they beheld that characteristic difference in the manner of Christians, which their profession gives one to expect, if they saw that disinterestedness, that humility, sober-mindedness, temperance, simplicity, and sincerity, which are the unavoidable fruits of a genuine faith! and which the Bible has taught them to expect in every Christian.

But, while a man talks like a saint, and yet lives like a sinner; while he professes to believe like an apostle, and yet leads the life of a sensualist; talks of ardent faith, and yet exhibits a cold and low practice; boasts himself the disciple of a meek Master, and yet is as much a slave to his passions as they who acknowledge no such authority; while he appears the proud professor of an humble religion, or the intemperate champion of a self-denying one—such a man brings Christianity into disrepute, confirms those in error who might have been awakened to conviction, strengthens doubt into disbelief, and hardens indifference into contempt.

Even among those of a better cast and a purer principle, the excessive restraints of timidity, caution, and that 'fear of man, which bringeth a snare,' confine, and almost stifle the generous spirit of an ardent exertion in the cause of religion. Christianity may pathetically expostulate, that it is not always 'an open enemy which dishonours her,' but her 'familiar friend.' And 'what dost thou more than others?' is a question which even the good and worthy should often ask themselves, in order to quicken their zeal; to prevent the total stagnation of unexerted principles, on the one hand or the danger, on the other, of their being driven down the gulf of ruin by the unresisted and confluent tides of temptation, fashion, and example.

In a very strict and mortified age, of which a scrupulous severity was the predominant character, precautions against an excessive zeal might, and doubtless would, be a wholesome and prudent measure. But in these times of relaxed principle and frigid indifference, to see people so vigilantly on their guard against the imaginary mischiefs of enthusiasm, while they run headlong into the real opposite perils of a destructive licentiousness, reminds us of the one-eyed animal in the fable; who, living on the banks of the ocean, never fancied he could be

destroyed any way but by drowning: but, while he kept that one eye constantly fixed on the sea, on which side he concluded all the peril lay, he was devoured by an enemy on the dry land, from which quarter he never suspected any danger.

Are not the mischiefs of an enthusiastic piety insisted on with as much earnestness as if an extravagant devotion were the prevailing propensity? Is not the necessity of moderation as vehemently urged as if an intemperate zeal were the epidemic distemper of the great world? as if all our apparent danger and natural bias lay on the side of a too rigid austerity, which required the discreet and constant counteraction of an opposite principle? Would not a stranger be almost tempted to imagine, from the frequent invectives against extreme strictness, that abstraction from the world, and a monastic rage for retreat, were the ruling temper? that we were in some danger of seeing our places of diversion abandoned, and the enthusiastic scenes of the *Holy Fathers of the desert* acted over again by the frantic and uncontrollable devotion of our young persons of fashion?

It is not to be denied, that enthusiasm is an evil to which the more religious of the lower class are peculiarly exposed; and this from a variety of causes, upon which this is not the place to enlarge. But who will be hardy enough to assert that the class we are now addressing, commonly fall into the same error. In order to establish or to overthrow this assertion, let each fashionable reader confess whether, within the sphere of his own observation, the fact be realized. Let each bring this vague charge specifically home to his own acquaintance. Let him honestly declare what proportion of noble enthusiasts, what number of honourable fanatics his own personal knowledge of the great world supplies. Let him compare the list of his enthusiastic with that of his luxurious friends, of his fanatical with his irreligious acquaintance, of 'the righteous overmuch' with such as 'care for none of these things;' of the strict and precise with that of the loose and irregular, of those who beggar themselves by their pious alms, with those who injure their fortune by extravagance; of those who 'are lovers of God,' with those who are lovers of pleasure. Let him declare whether he sees more of his associates swallowed up in gloomy meditation or immersed in sensuality; whether more are the slaves of superstious observances or of ambition. Surely those who address the rich and great in the way of exhortation and reproof, would do particularly well to define exactly what is indeed the prevailing character; lest, for want of such discrimination they should heighten the disease they might wish to cure, and increase the bias they would desire to counteract, by addressing to the voluptuary cautions which belong to the hermit, and thus aggravate his already inflamed appetites by invectives against an evil of which he is in little danger.

If, however, superstition, where it really does exist, injures religion, and we grant that it greatly injures it, yet we insist that scepticism injures it no less, for to deride, or to omit any of the component parts of Christian faith, is surely not a less fatal evil than making uncommanded additions to it.

It is seriously to be regretted in an age like the present, remarkable for indifference in religion and levity in manners, and which stands so much in need of lively patterns of firm and resolute piety, that many who really are Christians on the soberest conviction, should not appear more openly and decidedly on the side they have espoused; that they assimilate so very much with the manners of those about them (which manners they yet scruple not to disapprove) and, instead of an avowed but prudent steadfastness, which might draw over the others, appear evidently fearful of being thought precise and overscrupulous; and actually seem to disavow their right principles, by concessions and accommodations not strictly consistent with them. They often seem cautiously afraid of *doing too much*, and *going too far;* and the dangerous plea, the necessity of *living like other people*, of *being like the rest of the world*, and the propriety of *not being particular*, is brought as a reasonable apology for a too yielding and indiscriminate conformity.

But, at a time when almost all are sinking into the prevailing corruption, how beautiful, a rare, a single integrity is, let the instances of Lot and Noah declare! And to those with whom a poem is an higher authority than the Bible, let me recommend the most animated picture of a righteous singularity that ever was delineated in

> ——The Seraph Abdiel, faithful found
> Among the faithless, faithful only he
> Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
> Unshaken, unseduc'd, unterrify'd,
> His loyalty he kept, his love and zeal·
> Nor numbers, nor example with him wrought
> To swerve from truth or change his constant mind,
> Though single · PAR. LOST, B IV

Few indeed of the more orderly and decent have any objection to that degree of Religion which is compatible with their general acceptance with others, or the full enjoyment of their own pleasures. For a formal and ceremonious exercise of the outward duties of Christianity may not only be kept up without exciting censure, but will even procure a certain respect and confidence; and is not quite irreconcilable with a voluptuous and dissipated life. So far many go; and so far as 'godliness is profitable to the life that *is*,' it passes without reproach.

But as soon as men begin to consider religious exercises not as a decency, but a duty; not as a commutation for a self-denying life, but as a means to promote a holy temper and a virtuous conduct; as soon as they feel disposed to carry the effect of their devotion into their daily life; as soon as their principles discover themselves, by leading them to withdraw from those scenes and abstain from those actions in which the gay place their supreme happiness; as soon as something is to be *done*, and something is to be *parted with*, then the world begins to take offence, and to stigmatize the *activity* of that piety which had been commended as long as it remained *inoperative*, and had only evaporated in *words*.

When religion, like the vital principle, takes its seat in the heart and sends out supplies of

life and heat to every part; diffuses motion, soul, and vigour through the whole circulation, and informs and animates the whole man; when it operates on the practice, influences the conversation, breaks out into a lively zeal for the honour of God, and the best interest of mankind, then the sincerity of heart or the sanity of mind, of that person, will become questionable; and it must be owing to a very fortunate combination of circumstances indeed, if he can at once preserve the character of parts and piety, and retain the reputation of a man of sense after he has acquired that of a Christian.

It is surely a folly to talk of being too holy, too strict, or too good. When there really happens to appear some foundation for the charge of enthusiasm (as there are indeed sometimes in good people eccentricities which justify the censure) we may depend upon it, that it proceeds from some defect in the judgment, and not from any excess in the piety: for in goodness there is no excess: and it is as preposterous to say that any one is too good, or too pious, as that he is too wise, too strong, or too healthy: since the highest point in all these is only the perfection of that quality which we admired in a lower degree. There may be an *imprudent*, but there cannot be a *superabundant* goodness. An ardent imagination may mislead a rightly turned heart: and a weak intellect may incline the best intentioned to ascribe too much value to things of comparatively small importance. Such a one not having discernment enough to perceive where the force and stress of duty lie, may inadvertently discredit religion by a too scrupulous exactness in points of small intrinsic value.—And even well-meaning men as well as hypocrites may think they have done a meritorious service when their 'mint' and 'anise' are rigorously tithed.

But in observing the 'weightier matters of the law,' in the practice of universal holiness, in the love of God, there can be no possibility of exceeding, while there is no limitation in the command. We are in no danger of loving our neighbour *better* than ourselves; and let us remember that we do not go beyond, but fall short of our duty, while we love him *less*. If we were commanded to love God with *some* of our heart, with *part* of our soul, and a *portion* of our strength, there would then be some colour for those perpetual cavils about the *proportion* of love and the *degree* of obedience which are due to him. But as the command is so definite, so absolute, so comprehensive, so entire, nothing can be more absurd than that unmeaning, but not unfrequent charge brought against religious persons, that *they are too strict*. It is in effect saying, that they love God too much, and serve him too well.

The foundation of this silly censure is commonly laid in the first principles of education, where an early separation is systematically made between duty and pleasure. One of the first baits held out for the encouragement of children, is that when they have done their *duty* they will be entitled to some *pleasure*; thus forcibly disjoining what should be considered as inseparable. And there is not a more common justification of that idle and dissipated manner in which the second half of the Sunday is commonly spent, even by those who make a conscience of spending the former part properly, than that, 'now they have done their duty, they may take their pleasure.'

But while Christian observances are considered as tasks, which are to be got over to entitle us to something more pleasant; as a burthen which we must endure in order to propitiate an inexorable judge, who makes a hard bargain with his creatures, and allows them just so much amusement in pay for so much drudgery —we must not wonder that such low views are entertained of Christianity, and that a religious life is reprobated as strict and rigid.

But to him who acts from the nobler motive of love, and the animating power of the christian hope, the exercise is the reward, the permission is the privilege, the work is the wages. *He* does not carve out some miserable pleasure, and stipulate for some meagre diversion, to pay himself for the hard performance of his duty, who in that very performance experiences the highest pleasure; and feels the truest gratification of which his nature is capable, in devoting the noblest part of that nature to *His* service, to whom he owes all, because from Him he has received all.

This reprobated strictness, therefore, so far from being the source of discomfort and misery, as is pretended, is in reality the true cause of actual enjoyment, by laying the axe to the root of all those turbulent and uneasy passions, the unreserved and yet imperfect gratification of which does so much more tend to disturb our happiness, than that self-government which Christianity enjoins.

But all precepts seem rigorous, all observances are really hard, where there is not an entire conviction of God's right to our obedience and an internal principle of faith and love to make that obedience pleasant. A religious life is indeed a hard bondage to one immersed in the practices of the world, and under the dominion of its appetites and passions. To a real Christian it is 'perfect freedom.' He does not now abstain from such and such things, merely because they are forbidden (as he did in the first stages of his progress) but because his soul has no longer any pleasure in them. And it would be the severest of all punishments to oblige him to return to those practices, from which he once abstained with difficulty, and through the less noble principle of fear.

There is not, therefore, perhaps, a greater mistake than that common notion entertained by the more orderly part of the fashionable world, that a little religion will make people happy, but that a high degree of it is incompatible with all enjoyment. For surely *that* religion can add little to a man's happiness which restrains him from the commission of a wrong action, but which does not pretend to extinguish the bad principle from which the act proceeded. A religion which ties the hands, without changing the heart; which, like the hell of Tantalus, subdues not the desire, yet forbids the gratification, is indeed an uncomfortable religion: and such a religion, though it may gain a man something on the side of reputation, will give

him but little inward comfort. For what true peace can that heart enjoy which is left a prey to that temper which produced the evil, even though terror or shame may have prevented the outward act.

That people devoted to the pursuits of a dissipated life should conceive of religion as a difficult and even unattainable state, it is easy to believe. That they should conceive of it as an unhappy state, is the consummation of their error and their ignorance: for that a *rational* being should have his understanding enlightened; that an *immortal* being should have his views extended and enlarged; that a *helpless* being should have a consciousness of assistance; a *sinful* being the prospect of a pardon, or a *fallen* one the assurance of restoration, does not seem a probable ground of unhappiness: and on any other subject but religion, such reasoning would not be admissible.

CHAP. VI.

A stranger, from observing the fashionable mode of life, would not take this to be a Christian country.—Lives of professing Christians examined by a comparison with the Gospel.—Christianity not made the rule of life, even by those who profess to receive it as an object of faith.——Temporizing writers contribute to lower the credit of Christianity. Loose harangues on morals not calculated to reform the heart.

The Christian religion is not intended, as some of its fashionable professors seem to fancy, to operate as a charm, a talisman, or incantation, and to produce its effect by our pronouncing certain mystical words, attending at certain consecrated places, and performing certain hallowed ceremonies; but it is an active, vital, influential principle, operating on the heart, restraining the desires, affecting the general conduct, and as much regulating our commerce with the world, our business, pleasures, and enjoyments, our conversations, designs, and actions, as our behaviour in public worship, or even in private devotion.

That the effects of such a principle are strikingly visible in the lives and manners of the generality of those who give the law to fashion, will not perhaps be insisted on. And indeed, the whole present system of fashionable life is utterly destructive of seriousness. To instance only in the growing habit of frequenting great assemblies, which is generally thought insignificant, and is in effect so vapid, that one almost wonders how it can be dangerous;—it would excite laughter, because we are so broken into the habit, were I to insist on the immorality of passing one's whole life in a crowd.—But those promiscuous myriads which compose the society, falsely so called, of the gay world; who are brought together without esteem, remain without pleasure, and part without regret; who live in a round of diversions, the possession of which is so joyless, though the absence is so insupportable; these, by the mere force of incessant and indiscriminate association weaken, and in time wear out, the best feelings and affections of the human heart. And the mere spirit of dissipation, thus contracted from invariable habit, even detached from all its concomitant evils, is in itself as hostile to a religious spirit, as more positive and actual offences. Far be it from me to say that it is as criminal; I only insist that it is as opposite to that heavenly mindedness which is the essence of the Christian temper.

Let us suppose an ignorant and unprejudiced spectator, who should have been taught the theory of all the religions on the globe, brought hither from the other hemisphere. Set him down in the politest part of our capital, and let him determine, if he can, except from what he shall see interwoven in the texture of our laws, and kept up in the service of our churches, to what particular religion we belong. Let him not mix entirely with the most flagitious, but only with the most fashionable; at least, let him keep what they themselves call the *best company*. Let him scrutinize into the manners, customs, habits, and diversions, most in vogue, and then infer from all he has seen and heard, what is the established religion of the land.

That it could not be the Jewish he would soon discover: for of rites, ceremonies, and external observances, he would trace but slender remains. He would be equally convinced that it could not be the religion of old Greece and Rome; for that enjoined reverence to the gods, and inculcated obedience to the laws. His most probable conclusion would be in favour of the Mahometan faith, did not the excessive indulgence of some of the most distinguished in an article of intemperance prohibited even by the sensual prophet of Arabia, defeat that conjecture.

How would the petrified inquirer be astonished, if he were told that all these gay, thoughtless, luxurious, dissipated persons, professed a religion, meek, spiritual, self-denying; of which humility, poverty of spirit, a renewed mind, and non-conformity to the world, were specific distinctions!

When he saw the sons of men of fortune, scarcely old enough to be sent to school, admitted to be spectators of the turbulent and unnatural diversions of racing and gaming; and the almost infant daughters, even of wise and virtuous mothers (an innovation which fashion herself forbade till now) carried with most unthrifty anticipation to the frequent and late protracted ball—would he believe that we were of a religion which has required from those very parents a solemn vow that these children should be bred up 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?' That they should constantly 'believe God's holy word and keep his commandments?'

When he observed the turmoils of ambition, the competitions of vanity, the ardent thirst for the possession of wealth, and the wild misapplication of it when possessed; how could he persuade himself that all these anxious pursuers of present enjoyment were the disciples of a master who exhibited the very character and essence of his religion, as it were in a motto—'MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD!'

When he beheld those nocturnal clubs, so

subversive of private virtue and domestic happiness, would he conceive that we were of a religion which in express terms 'exhorts young men to be sober-minded?'

When he saw those magnificent and brightly illuminated structures which decorate and disgrace the very precincts of the royal residence, (so free itself from all these pollutions) when he beheld the nightly offerings made to the demon of play, on whose cruel altar the fortune and happiness of wives and children are offered up without remorse; would he not conclude that we were of some of those barbarous religions which enjoins unnatural sacrifices, and whose horrid deities are appeased with nothing less than human victims?

Now ought we not to pardon our imaginary spectator, if he should not at once conclude that all the various descriptions of persons above noticed professed the Christian religion; supposing him to have no other way of determining but by the conformity of their manners to that rule by which he had undertaken to judge them? We indeed must judge with a certain latitude, and candidly take the present state of society into the account; which in some few instances, perhaps, must be allowed to dispense with that literal strictness, which more peculiarly belonged to the first ages of the Gospel.

But as this is really a Christian country, professing to enjoy the purest faith in the purest form, it cannot be unreasonable to go a little farther, and inquire whether Christianity, however firmly established and generally professed in it, is really practised by that order of fashionable persons, who, while they are absorbed in the delights of the world, and their whole souls devoted to the pursuit of pleasure, yet still arrogate to themselves the honourable name of Christians, and occasionally testify their claim to this high character, by a general profession of their belief in, and a decent occasional compliance with the forms of religion, and the ordinances of our church?

This inquiry must be made, not by a comparison with the state of Christianity in other countries (a mode always fallacious, whether adopted by nations or individuals, is that of comparing themselves with those who are still worse) nor must it be made from any notions drawn from custom, or any other human standard; but from a scripture view of what real religion is; from any one of those striking and comprehensive representations of it, which may be found condensed in so many single passages of the sacred writings.

Whoever then looks into the Book of God, and observes its prevailing spirit, and then looks into that part of the world under consideration, will not surely be thought very censorious, if he pronounce that the conformity between them does not seem to be *very* striking; and the manners of the one do not very evidently appear to be dictated by the spirit of the other. Will he discover that the Christian religion is so much as pretended to be made the *rule of life* even by that decent order who profess not to have discarded it as an object of faith? Do even the more regular, who neglect not public observances, consider Christianity as the *measure of their actions!* Do even what the world calls religious persons, employ their time, their abilities, and their fortune, as talents for which they however confess they believe themselves accountable: or do they, in any respect live, I will not say up to their profession (for what human being does so?) but in any consistency with it, or even with an eye to its predominant tendencies? Do persons in general of this description seem to consider the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, as any thing more than a form of words necessary indeed to be repeated, and proper to be believed? But do they consider them as necessary to be adopted into a governing principle of action?

Is it acting a consistent part to declare in the solemn assemblies that they are 'miserable offenders,' and that 'there is no health in them,' and yet never in their daily lives to discover any symptom of that humility and self-abasement, which should naturally be implied in such a declaration?

Is it reasonable or compatible, I will not say with piety, but with good sense, earnestly to lament having 'followed the devices and desires of their own hearts,' and then deliberately to plunge into such a torrent of dissipations as clearly indicates that they do not struggle to oppose *one* of these devices, to resist *one* of these desires? I dare not say this is hypocrisy, I do not believe it is, but surely it is inconsistency.

'Be ye not conformed to this world,' is a leading principle in the book they acknowledge as their guide. But after unresistingly assenting to this as a doctrinal truth, at church—how absurd would they think any one who should expect them to adopt it into their practice! Perhaps the whole law of God does not exhibit a single precept more expressly, more steadily, and more uniformly rejected by the class in question. If it mean any thing, it can hardly be consistent with that mode of life emphatically distinguished by the appellation of *fashionable*.

Now, would it be much more absurd (for any other reason but because it is not the custom) if our legislators were to meet one day in every week, gravely to read over all the obsolete statutes, and rescinded acts of parliament, than it is for the order of persons of the above description to assemble every Sunday, to profess their belief in and submission to a system of principles, which they do not so much as *intend* shall be binding on their practice?

But to continue our inquiry.—There is not a more common or more intelligible definition of human duty, than that of 'Fear God, and keep his commandments.' Now, as to the first of these inseparable precepts, can we, with the utmost stretch of charity, be very forward to conclude that God is really 'very greatly feared' in secret, by those who give too manifest indications that they live 'without him in the world?' And as to the latter precept, which naturally grows out of the other—without noticing any of the flagrant breaches of the moral law, let us only confine ourselves to the allowed, general, and notorious violation of the third and fourth commandments, by the higher as well as by the lower orders; breaches so flagrant, that they force themselves on the observation of the most

inattentive, too palpably to be either unnoticed or palliated.

Shall we have reason to change our opinion if we take that Divine representation of the sum and substance of religion, and apply it as a touchstone in the present trial—'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy mind, and with *all* thy soul, and with *all* thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself?' Now, judge by inference, do we see many public proofs of that heavenly-mindedness which would be the inevitable effect of such a fervent and animated dedication of all the powers, faculties, and affections of the soul to Him who gave it? And, as to the great rule of social duty expressed in the second clause, do we observe as much of that considerate kindness, that pure disinterestedness, that conscientious attention to the comfort of others, especially of dependents and inferiors, as might be expected from those who enjoyed the privilege of so unerring a standard of conduct? a standard, which, if impartially consulted, must make our kindness to others bear an exact proportion to our self-love; a rule in which christian principle, operating on human sensibility, could not fail to decide aright in every supposeable case. For no man can doubt how he ought to act towards another, while the inward corresponding suggestions of conscience and feeling concur in letting him know how he would wish, in a change of circumstances, that others should act towards him.

Or suppose we take a more detailed survey, by a third rule, which indeed is not so much the principle as the effect of piety—'True religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself *unspotted from the world*.' Now, if Christianity insists that obedience to the latter injunction be the true evidence of the sincerity of those who fulfil the former, is the beneficence of the fashionable world *very* strikingly illustrated by this spotless purity, this exemption from the pollutions of the world, which is here declared to be its invariable concomitant?

But if I were to venture to take my estimate with a view more immediately evangelical; if I presumed to look for that genuine Christianity which consists in repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;' to insist, that whatever *natural* religion and *fashionable* religion may teach, it is the peculiarity of the *Christian* religion to humble the sinner and exalt the Saviour; to insist that not only the grossly flagitious, but that *all* have sinned; that *all* are by nature in a state of condemnation; that *all* stand in need of mercy, of which there is no hope but on the Gospel terms; that eternal life is promised to those *only* who accept it on the offered conditions of 'faith, repentance, and renewed obedience;'—if I were to insist on such evidences of our Christianity as these; if I were to express these doctrines in plain scriptural terms without lowering, qualifying, disguising, or doing them away; if I were to insist on this belief, and its implied and corresponding practices; I am aware that, with whatever condescending patience this little tract might have been so far perused, many a fashionable reader would here throw it aside, as having now detected the palpable enthusiast, the abettor of 'strange doctrines,' long ago consigned over by the liberal and the polite to bigots and fanatics. And yet, if the Bible be true, this is a simple and faithful description of Christianity.

Surely men forget that we are urging them upon their own principles; that while we are urging them with motives drawn from Christianity, they seem to have as little concern in these motives as if they themselves were of another religion. It is not a name that will stand us instead. It is not merely glorying in the title of Christians, while we are living in the neglect of its precepts; it is not in valuing ourselves on the profession of religion as creditable, while we reject the power of it as fanatical, that will save us! In any other circumstances of life it would be accounted absurd to have a set of propositions, principles, statutes, or fundamental articles, and not to make them the ground of our acting as well as of our reasoning. In these supposed instances the blame would lie in the contradiction, in religion it lies in the agreement. Strange! that to act in consequence of received and acknowledged principles, should be accounted weakness! Strange, that what alone is truly consistent, should be branded as absurd! Strange, that men must really forbear to act rationally, only that they may not be reckoned mad! Strange, that they should be commended for having prayed in the excellent words of the Bible and of our church, for 'a clean heart, and a right spirit;' and yet, if they gave any sign of such a transformation of heart, they should be accounted, if not fanatical, at least, singular, weak, or melancholy men.

After having, however, just ventured to hint at what are indeed the humbling doctrines of the gospel, the doctrines to which alone eternal life is promised, I shall in deep humility forbear to enlarge on this part of the subject, which has been exhausted by the labours of wise and pious men in all ages. Unhappily, however, the most awakening of these writers are not the favourite guests in the closets of the more fashionable Christians: who, when they happen to be more seriously disposed than ordinary, are fond of finding out some middle kind of reading, which recommends some half-way state, something between Paganism and Christianity, suspending the mind, like the position of Mahomet's tomb, between earth and heaven: a kind of reading which, while it quiets the conscience by being on the side of morals, neither awakens fear, nor alarms security. By dealing in generals, it comes home to the hearts of none: it flatters the passions of the reader, by ascribing high merits to the performance of certain right actions, and the forbearance from certain wrong ones; among which, that reader must be very unlucky indeed who does not find some performances and some forbearances of his own. It at once enables him to keep heaven in his eye, and the world in his heart. It agreeably represents the readers to themselves as amiable persons, guilty indeed of a few faults, but never as condemned sinners under sentence of death. It commonly abounds with high encomiums on the dignity of human

nature; the good effects of virtue on health, fortune, and reputation: the dangers of a blind zeal, the mischiefs of enthusiasm, and the folly of singularity, with various other kindred sentiments; which, if they do not fall in of themselves with the corruptions of our nature, may, by a little warping, be easily accommodated to them.

These are the too successful practices of certain luke-warm and temporizing divines, who have become popular by blunting the edge of the heavenly tempered weapon, whose salutary keenness, but for their 'deceitful handling,' would often 'pierce to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.'

But those severer preachers of righteousness, who disgust by applying too closely to the conscience; who probe the inmost heart and lay open all its latent peccancies; who treat of principles as the only certain source of manners; who lay the axe at the root, oftener than the pruning knife to the branch; who insist much and often on the great leading truths, that man is a fallen creature, who must be restored, if restored at all, by means very little flattering to human pride——such heart-searching writers as these will seldom find access to the houses and hearts of the more modish Christians, unless they happen to owe their admission to some subordinate quality of style; unless they can captivate, with the seducing graces of language, those well-bred readers, who are childishly amusing themselves with the garnish, when they are perishing for want of food; who are searching for polished periods when they should be in quest of alarming truths: who are looking for elegance of composition when they should be anxious for eternal life.

Whatever comparative praise may be due to the former class of writers, when viewed with others of a less decent order, yet I am not sure whether so many books of frigid morality, exhibiting such inferior motives of action, such moderate representations of duty, and such a low standard of principle; have not done religion much more harm than good; whether they do not lead many a reader to inquire what is the lowest degree in the scale of virtue with which he may content himself, so as barely to escape eternal punishment; how much indulgence he may allow himself, without absolutely forfeiting his chance of safety: what is the uttermost verge to which he may venture of this world's enjoyment, and yet just keep within a possibility of hope for the next: adjusting the scales of indulgence and security with such a scrupulous equilibrium, as not to lose much pleasure, yet not incur much penalty.

This is hardly an exaggerated representation, and to these low views of duty is partly owing so much of that bare-weight virtue with which even Christians are apt to content themselves; fighting for every inch of ground which may possibly be taken within the pales of permission, and stretching those pales to the utmost edge of that limitation about which the world and the Bible contend.

But while the nominal Christian is persuading himself that there can be no harm in going *a little farther*, the real Christian is always afraid of going too far. While the one is debating for a little more disputed ground, the other is so fearful of straying into the regions of unhallowed indulgence, that he keeps at a prudent distance from the extremity of his permitted limits; and is anxious in restricting as the other is desirous of extending them. One thing is clear, and it may be no bad indication by which to discover the state of man's heart to himself; while he is contending for this allowance, and stipulating for the other indulgence, it will show him that, whatever change there may be in his life, there is none in his heart; the temper remains as it did; and it is by the inward frame rather than the outward act that he can best judge of his *own* state, whatever may be the rule by which he undertakes to judge of that of another.

It is less wonderful that there are not more Christians, than that Christians, as they are called, are not better men; for if Christianity be not true, the motives of virtue are not high enough to quicken ordinary men to very extraordinary exertions. We see them do and suffer every day for popularity, for custom, for fashion, for the point of honour, not only more than good men do and suffer for religion, but a great deal more than religion requires them to do. For her *reasonable service* demands no sacrifices but what are sanctioned by good sense, sound policy, right reason, and uncorrupt jndgment.

Many of these fashionable professors even go so far as to bring their right faith as an apology for their wrong practice. They have a commodious way of intrenching themselves within the shelter of some general position of unquestionable truth: even the great Christian hope becomes a snare to them. They apologize for a life of offence, by taking refuge in the extreme goodness they are abusing. That 'God is all merciful,' is the common reply to those who hint to them their danger. This is a false and fatal application of a divine and comfortable truth. Nothing can be more certain than the proposition, nor more delusive than the inference: for their deduction implies, not that he is merciful to sin repented of, but to sin continued in. But it is a most fallacious hope to expect that God will violate his own covenant, or that he is indeed, 'all mercy,' to the utter exclusion of his other attributes of perfect holiness, purity and justice.

It is a dangerous folly to rest on these vague and general notions of indefinite mercy; and nothing can be more delusive than this indefinite trust in being forgiven in our *own* way, after God has clearly revealed to us that he will only forgive us in *his* way. Besides, is there not something singularly base in sinning against God *because* he is merciful?

But the truth is no one does truly trust in God, who does not endeavour to obey him. For to break his laws, and yet to depend on his favour; to live in opposition to his will, and yet in expectation of his mercy; to violate his commands, and yet to look for his acceptance, would not, in any other instance, be thought a reasonable ground of conduct; and yet it is by no means as uncommon as it is inconsistent.

CHAP. VII.

View of those who acknowledge Christianity as a perfect system of morals, but deny its divine authority.—Morality not the whole of Religion.

As in the preceding chapter notice was taken of that description of persons who profess to receive Christianity with great reverence as a matter of faith, who yet do not pretend to adopt it as a rule of conduct; I shall conclude these slight remarks with some short animadversions on another set of men, and that not a small one among the decent and fashionable, who profess to think it exhibits an admirable system of morals, while they deny its divine authority; though that authority alone can make the necessity of obeying its precepts binding on the consciences of men.

This is a very discreet scheme; for such persons at once save themselves from the discredit of having their understanding imposed upon by a supposed blind submission to evidences and authorities; and yet, prudently enough, secure to themselves, in no small degree, the reputation of good men. By steering this middle kind of course, they contrive to be reckoned liberal by the *philosophers*, and decent by the believers.

But we are not to expect to see the pure morality of the Gospel very carefully transfused into the lives of such objectors. And indeed it would be unjust to imagine that the precepts *should* be most scrupulously observed by those who reject the authority. The influence of divine truth must necessarily best prepare the heart for an unreserved obedience to its laws. If we do not depend on the offers of the Gospel, we shall want the best motives to the actions and performances which it enjoins. A lively belief *must* therefore precede a hearty obedience. Let those who think otherwise, hear what the Saviour of the world has said: 'For this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness unto the truth.' Those who reject the Gospel, therefore, reject the *power* of performing good actions. That command, for instance, to 'set our affections on things above,' will operate but faintly, till that Spirit from which the command proceeds, touches the heart, and convinces that no human good is worthy of the entire affection of an immortal creature. An unreserved faith in the promiser *must* precede our acceptable performance of any duty to which the promise is annexed.

But as to a set of duties enforced by no other motive than a bare acquiescence in their beauty, and a cold conviction of their propriety, but impelled by no obedience to his authority who imposes them; though we know not how well they might be performed by pure and impeccable beings, yet we know how they commonly *are* performed by frail and disorderly creatures, fallen from their innocence, and corrupt in their very natures.

Nothing but a conviction of the truth of Christianity can reconcile thinking beings to the extraordinary appearances of things in the Creator's moral government of the world. The works of God are an enigma, of which his word alone is the solution. The dark veil which is thrown over the divine dispensations in this lower world must naturally shock those who consider only the single scene which is acting on the present stage; but is reconcilable to him who, having learnt from Revelation the nature of the laws by which the great Author acts, trusts confidently that the catastrophe will set all to rights. The confusion which sin and the passions have introduced; the triumph of wickedness; the seemingly arbitrary disproportion of human conditions, accountable on no scheme but that which the Gospel has opened to us—have all a natural tendency to withdraw from the love of God, the hearts of those who erect themselves into critics on the Divine conduct, and yet will not study the plan, and get acquainted with the rules, so far as it has pleased the Supreme Disposer to reveal them.

Till therefore the word of God is used 'as a lamp to their paths,' men can neither truly discern the crookedness of their own ways, nor the perfection of that light by which they are directed to walk. And this light can only be seen by its own proper brightness; it has no other medium. Until therefore, 'the secret of the Lord' is with men, they will not truly 'fear him;' until he has 'enlarged their hearts' with the knowledge and belief of his word, they will not very vigorously run 'the way of his commandments.' Until they have acquired that 'faith, without which it is impossible to please God,' they will not attain that 'holiness, without which no man can see him.'

And indeed if God has thought fit to make the Gospel an instrument of salvation, we must own the necessity of receiving it as a divine institution, before it is likely to operate very effectually on the human conduct. The great Creator, if we may judge by analogy from natural things, is so just and wise an economist, that he always adapts, with the most accurate precision, the instrument to the work; and never lavishes more means than are necessary to accomplish the proposed end. If therefore Christianity had been intended for nothing more than a mere system of ethics, such a system surely might have been produced at an infinitely less expense. The long chain of prophecy, the succession of miracles, the labours of apostles, the blood of the saints, to say nothing of the great costly sacrifice which the Gospel records, might surely have been spared. Lessons of mere human virtue might have been delivered by some suitable instrument of human wisdom, strengthened by the visible authority of human power. A bare system of morals might have been communicated to mankind with a more reasonable prospect of advantage, by means not so repugnant to human pride. A mere scheme of conduct might have been delivered with far greater probability of the success of its reception by Antoninus the emperor, or Plato the philosopher, than by Paul the tent-maker, or Peter the fisherman.

Christianity, then, must be embraced entirely, if it be received at all. It must be taken without mutilation, as a perfect scheme, in the way in which God has been pleased to reveal it. It must be accepted, not as exhibiting beautiful

parts, but as presenting one consummate whole, of which the perfection arises from coherence and dependence, from relation and consistency. Its power will be weakened, and its energy destroyed, if every caviller pulls out a pin, or obstructs a spring with the presumptuous view of new modelling the Divine work, and making it go to his own mind. There must be no breaking the system into portions of which we are at liberty to choose one and reject another. There is no separating the evidences from the doctrines, the doctrines from the precepts, belief from obedience, morality from piety, the love of our neighbour from the love of God. If we allow Christianity to be any thing, we must allow it to be every thing: if we allow the Divine Author to be indeed unto us 'wisdom and righteousness,' he must be also sanctification and redemption.'

Christianity then is assuredly something more than a mere set of rules; and faith, though it never pretended to be the substitute for an useful life, is indispensably necessary to its acceptance with God. The Gospel never offers to make religion supersede morality, but every where clearly proves that morality is not the whole of religion. Piety is not only necessary as a *means*, but is itself a most important *end*. It is not only the best principle of moral conduct, but is an indispensable and absolute duty in itself. It is not only the highest motive to the practice of virtue, but is a prior obligation, and absolutely necessary, even when detached from its immediate influence on outward actions. Religion will survive all the virtues of which it is the source; for we shall be living in the noblest exercises of piety when we shall have no objects on which to exercise many human virtues. When there will be no distress to be relieved, no injuries to be forgiven, no evil habits to be subdued, there will be a Creator to be blessed and adored, a Redeemer to be loved and praised.

To conclude, a real Christian is not such merely by habit, profession, or education; he is not a Christian in order to acquit his sponsors of the engagements they entered into in his name; but he is one who has embraced Christianity from a conviction of its truth, and an experience of its excellence. He is not only confident in matters of faith by evidences suggested to his understanding, or reasons which correspond to his inquiries; but all these evidences of truth, all these principles of goodness are working into his heart, and exhibit themselves in his practice. He sees so much of the body of the great truths and fundamental points of religion, that he has a satisfactory trust in those lesser branches which ramify to infinity from the parent stock; though he may not individually and completely comprehend them all. He is so powerfully convinced of the general truth, and so deeply impressed by the general spirit of the Gospel, that he is not startled by every little difficulty; he is not staggered by every 'hard saying.' Those depths of mystery which surpass his understanding do not shake his faith, and this, not because he is credulous, and given to take things upon trust, but because, knowing that his foundations are right, he sees how one truth of Scripture supports another like the bearings of a geometrical building; because he sees the aspect one doctrine has upon another; because he sees the consistency of each with the rest, and the place, order, and relation of all. The real Christian by no means rejects reason from his religion; so far from it, he most carefully exercises it in furnishing his mind with all the evidences of its truth. But he does not stop here. Christianity furnishes him with a living principle of action, with the vital influences of the holy Spirit, which, while it enlightens his faculties, rectifies his will, turns his knowledge into practice, sanctifies his heart, changes his habits, and proves that when faithfully received, the word of truth 'is life indeed, and is spirit indeed!'

REMARKS ON THE SPEECH OF M. DUPONT,

MADE IN THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF FRANCE.

ON THE SUBJECTS OF RELIGION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION.

A PREFATORY ADDRESS

TO THE LADIES, &c. OF GREAT BRITAIN,—IN BEHALF OF THE FRENCH EMIGRANT CLERGY.

If it be allowed that there may arise occasions so extraordinary that all the lesser motives of delicacy ought to vanish before them, it is presumed that the present emergency will be considered as presenting one of those occasions, and will in some measure justify the hardiness of this address from a private individual, who, stimulated by the urgency of the case, sacrifices inferior considerations to the ardent desire of raising further supplies towards relieving a distress as pressing as it is unexampled.

We are informed by public advertisement, that the large sums already so liberally subscribed for the emigrant clergy are almost exhausted. Authentic information adds, that multitudes of distressed exiles in the island of Jersey, are on the point of wanting bread.

Very many to whom this address is made have

NOTE.—The profits of this publication, which were considerable, were given to the French emigrant clergy.

already contributed. O let them not be weary in well-doing! I know that many are making generous exertions for the just and natural claims of the widows and children of our own brave seamen and soldiers. Let it not be said, that the present is an interfering claim. Those to whom I write, have bread enough, and to spare. You, who fare sumptuously every day, and yet complain that you have little to bestow, let not this bounty be subtracted from another bounty, but subtract it rather from some superfluous expense.

The beneficent and right-minded want no arguments to be pressed upon them; but it is not those alone who I address; I write to persons of every description. Luxurious habits of living, which really furnish the distressed with the fairest grounds for application, are too often urged by those who practise them as a motive for withholding assistance, and produced as a plea for having little to spare. Let her who indulges such habits, and pleads such excuses in consequence, reflect, that by retrenching one costly dish from her abundant table, by cutting off the superfluities of one expensive desert, omitting one evening's public amusement, she may furnish at least a week's subsistence to more than one person,* as liberally bred perhaps as herself, and who, in his own country, may have often tasted how much more blessed it is to give than to receive—to a once affluent minister of religion, who has been long accustomed to bestow the necessaries he is now reduced to solicit.

Even your young daughters, whom maternal prudence has not yet furnished with the means of bestowing, may be cheaply taught the first rudiments of charity, together with an important lesson of economy: they may be taught to sacrifice a feather, a set of ribands, an expensive ornament, an idle diversion And if they are on this occasion instructed, that there is no true charity without self-denial, they will gain more than they are called upon to give: for the suppression of one luxury for a charitable purpose, is the exercise of two virtues, and this without any pecuniary expense.--An indulgence is abridged and christian charity is exercised.

Let the sick and afflicted remember how dreadful it must be, to be exposed to the sufferings they feel without one of the alleviations which mitigate their affliction. How dreadful it is to be without comfort, without necessaries, without a home—without a country! While the gay and prosperous would do well to recollect, how suddenly and terribly those unhappy persons for whom we plead, were, by the surprising vicissitudes of life, thrown down from heights of gayety and prosperity equal to what *they* are now enjoying. And let those who have husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, or friends, reflect on the uncertainties of war, and the revolution of human affairs. It is only by imagining the possibility that those who are dear to us may be placed by the instability of human events in the same calamitous circumstances, that we can obtain an adequate feeling of the woes we are called upon to commiserate.

In a distress so wide and comprehensive as the present, many are prevented from giving by that popular excuse, 'That it is but a drop of water in the ocean.' But let them reflect, that if all the individual drops were withheld, there would be no ocean at all; and the inability to give much ought not, on any occasion, to be converted into an excuse for giving nothing. Even moderate circumstances need not plead an exemption. The industrious tradesman will not, even in a political view, be eventually a loser by his small contribution. The money now raised is neither carried out of our country, nor dissipated in luxuries, but returns again to the community; returns to our shops and to our markets, to procure the bare necessaries of life.

Some have objected to the difference of religion of those for whom we solicit. Such an objection hardly deserves a serious answer. Surely if the superstitious Tartar hopes to become possessed of the courage and talents of the enemy he slays, the Christian is not afraid of catching, or of propagating the error of the sufferer he relieves.—Christian charity is of no party. We plead not for their faith, but for their wants. But while we affirm that it is not for their popery but their poverty which we solicit; yet let the more scrupulous, who look for desert as well as distress in the objects of their bounty, bear in mind, that if these men could have sacrificed their conscience to their convenience, they had not now been in this country; and if we wish for proselytes, who knows but it may be the first step towards their conversion, if we show them the purity of our religion, by the beneficence of our actions.

If you will permit me to press upon you such high motives (and it were to be wished that in every action we were to be influenced only by the highest) perhaps no act of bounty to which you may be called out, can ever come so immediately, and so literally under that solemn and affecting description, which will be recorded in the great day of account—*I was a stranger, and ye took me in.*

* Mr Bowdler's letter states, that about six shillings a week includes the expenses of each priest at Winchester,

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SPEECH OF MR. DUPONT.

The following is an exact Translation from a Speech made in the National Convention at Paris, on Friday, the 14th of December, 1792, in a debate on the subject of establishing Public Schools for the education of Youth, by citizen Dupont, a member of considerable weight; and as the doctrines contained in it were received with unanimous applause, except from two or three of the clergy, it may be fairly considered as an exposition of the creed of that enlightened assembly., Translated from Le Moniteur, of Sunday, the 16th of December, 1792.

What! Thrones are overturned! Sceptres broken! Kings expire! And yet the altars of God remain! (Here there is a murmur from some members; and the abbe Ichon demands that the person speaking may be called to order.) Tyrants in outrage to nature, continue to burn an impious incense on those altars! (Some murmurs arise, but they are lost in the applauses from the majority of the assembly.) The thrones that have been reversed, have left these altars naked, unsupported, and tottering. A single breath of enlightened reason will now be sufficient to make them disappear; and if humanity is under obligations to the French nation for the first of these benefits, the fall of kings, can it be doubted but that the French people now sovereign, will be wise enough, in like manner, to overthrow those altars and *those idols* to which those kings have hitherto made them subject? *Nature* and *Reason*, these ought to be the gods of men! These are my gods! (Here the abbe Audrein cried out, 'there is no bearing this;' and rushed out of the assembly.—A great laugh.) Admire *nature*—cultivate *reason*. And you, legislators, if you desire that the French people should be happy, make haste to propagate these principles, and to teach them in your primary schools, instead of those fanatical principles which have hitherto been taught. The tyranny of kings was confined to make their people miserable in this life—but those other tyrants, the priests, extend their dominion into another, of which they have no other idea than of eternal punishments; a doctrine which some men have hitherto had the good nature to believe. But the moment of the catastrophe is come—all these prejudices must fall at the same time. *We must destroy them, or they will destroy us.* For myself, I honestly avow to the convention, *I am an atheist!* (Here there is some noise and tumult. But a great number of members cry out, 'what is that to us—you are an honest man!') But I defy a single individual amongst the twenty-four millions of Frenchmen, to make any well-grounded reproach. I doubt whether the Christians or the Catholics, of which the last speaker, and those of his opinion, have been talking to us, can make the same challenge. (Great applauses.) There is another consideration—Paris has had great losses. It has been deprived of the commerce of luxury; of that factitious splendour which was found at courts, and invited strangers hither. Well! We must repair these losses. Let me then represent to you the times, that are fast approaching, when our philosophers, whose names are celebrated throughout Europe, Petion, Syeyes, Condorcet, and others—surrounded in our Pantheon, as the Greek Philosophers were at Athens, with a crowd of disciples coming from all parts of Europe, walking like the peripatetics, and teaching—this man, the system of the universe, and developing the progress of all human knowledge; that, perfectioning the social system, and showing in our decree of the 17th of June, 1789, the seeds of the insurrections of the 14th of July, and the 10th of August, and of all those insurrections which are spreading with such rapidity throughout Europe—so that these young strangers, on their return to their respective countries, may spread the same lights, and may operate *for the happiness of mankind*, similar revolutions throughout the world.

(Numberless applauses arose, almost throughout the whole assembly, and in the galleries.)

REMARKS ON THE SPEECH OF MR. DUPONT,

ON THE SUBJECT OF RELIGION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION.

It is presumed that it may not be thought unseasonable at this critical time to offer to the public, and especially to the more religious part of it, a few slight observations, occasioned by the late famous speech of Mr. Dupont, which exhibits the confession of faith of a considerable member of the French national convention. Though the speech itself has been pretty generally read, yet it was thought necessary to prefix it to those remarks, lest such as have not already perused it, might, from an honest reluctance to credit the existence of such principles, dispute its authenticity, and accuse the remarks, if unaccompanied by the speech, of a spirit of invective, and unfair exaggeration. At the same time it must be confessed that its impiety is so monstrous, that many good men were of opinion that it ought not to be made familiar to the minds of Englishmen; for there are crimes with which even the imagination should never come in contact, and which it is almost safer not to controvert than to detail.

But as an ancient nation intoxicated their slaves, and then exposed them before their children, in order to increase their horror of intemperance; so it is hoped that this piece of impiety may be placed in such a light before the eyes of the Christian reader, that, in proportion as his detestation is raised, his faith, instead of being shaken, will be only so much the more strengthened.

This celebrated speech, though delivered in an assembly of politicians, is not on a question of politics, but on one as superior to all political considerations as the soul is to the body, as eternity is to time. The object of this oration is not to dethrone kings, but him by whom kings reign, It does not excite the cry of indignation in the orator that *Louis* the Sixteenth reigns, but that *the Lord God omnipotenth reigneth!*

Nor is this the declaration of some obscure and anonymous person, but it is an exposition of the creed of a public leader. It is not a sentiment hinted in a journal, hazarded in a pamphlet, or thrown out at a disputing club; but it is the implied faith of the rulers of a great nation.

Little notice would have been due to this fa-

mous speech, if it conveyed the sentiments of only *one* vain orator; but it should be observed, that it was heard, received, *applauded*, with two or three exceptions only—a fact, which you, who have scarcely believed in the existence of atheism, will hardly credit, and which, for the honour of the eighteenth century, it is hoped that our posterity will reject as totally incredible.

A love of liberty, generous in its principle, inclines some well-meaning but mistaken men still to favour the proceedings of the national convention of France. They do not perceive that the licentious wildness which has been excited in that country, is destructive of all true happiness, and no more resembles liberty, than the tumultuous joys of the drunkard resemble the cheerfulness of a sober and well-regulated mind.

To those who do not know of what strange inconsistencies man is made up; who have not considered how some persons having at first been hastily and heedlessly drawn in as approvers, by a sort of natural progression, soon become principals:—to those who have never observed by what a variety of strange associations in the mind, opinions that seem the most irreconcilable meet at some unsuspected turning, and come to be united in the same man;—to all such it may appear quite incredible, that well meaning and even pious people should continue to applaud the principles of a set of men who have publicly made known their intention of abolishing Christianity, as far as the demolition of altars, priests, temples, and institutions, *can* abolish it. As to the religion itself, this also they may traduce and reject, but we know from the comfortable promise of an authority still sacred in this country at least, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Let me not be misunderstood by those to whom these slight remarks are principally addressed; by that class of well-intentioned but ill-judging people, who favour at least, if they do not adopt, the prevailing sentiments of the new republic. You are not here accused of being the wilful abettors of infidelity. God forbid! 'We are persuaded better things of you; and things which accompany salvation.' But this *ignis fatuus* of liberty and universal brotherhood, which the French are madly pursuing, with the insignia of freedom in one hand, and the bloody bayonet in the other, has bewitched your senses, is misleading your steps, and betraying you to ruin. You are gazing at a meteor raised by the vapours of vanity, which these wild and infatuated wanderers are pursuing to their destruction; and though for a moment you mistake it for a heaven born light, which leads to the perfection of human freedom, you will, should you join in the mad pursuit, soon discover that it will conduct you over dreary wilds and sinking bogs, only to plunge you in deep and inevitable destruction.

Much, very much is to be said in vindication of your favouring in the *first instance* their political projects. The cause they took in hand seemed to be the great cause of human kind. Its very name insured its popularity. What English heart did not exult at the demolition of the Bastile? What lover of his species did not triumph in the warm hope, that one of the finest countries in the world would soon be one of the most free? Popery and despotism, though chained by the gentle influence of Louis the Sixteenth, had actually slain their thousands. Little was it then imagined, that Anarchy and Atheism, the monsters who were about to succeed them, would soon slay their ten thousands. If we cannot regret the defeat of the two former tyrants, what must they be who can triumph in the mischiefs of the two latter? Who, I say, that had a head to reason, or a heart to feel, did not glow with the hope, that from the ruins of tyranny, and the rubbish of popery, a beautiful and finely framed edifice would in time have been constructed, and that ours would not have been the only country in which the patriot's fair idea of well-understood liberty, the politician's view of a perfect constitution, together with the establishment of a pure and reasonable, a sublime and rectified Christianity, might be realized?

But, alas! it frequently happens that the wise and good are not the most adventurous in attacking the mischiefs which they are the first to perceive and lament. With a timidity in some respects virtuous, they fear attempting any thing which may possibly aggravate the evils they deplore, or put to hazard the blessings they already enjoy. They dread plucking up the wheat with the tares, and are rather apt, with a spirit of hopeless resignation,

> 'To bear the ills they have,
> 'Than fly to others that they know not of.'

While sober-minded and considerate men, therefore, sat mourning over this complicated mass of error, and waited till God, in his own good time, should open the blind eyes; the vast scheme of reformation was left to that set of rash and presumptuous adventurers who are generally watching how they may convert public grievances to their own personal account. It was undertaken, not upon the broad basis of a wise and well-digested scheme, of which all the parts should contribute to the perfection of one consistent whole: it was carried on, not by those steady measures, founded on rational deliberation, which are calculated to accomplish so important an end; not with a temperance which indicated a sober love of law, or a sacred regard for religion; but with the most extravagant lust of power, with the most inordinate vanity which perhaps ever instigated human measures—a lust of power, which threatens to extend its desolating influence over the whole globe;—a vanity of the same destructive species with that which stimulated the celebrated incendiary of Ephesus, who being weary of his native obscurity and insignificance, and preferring infamy to oblivion, could contrive no other road to fame and immortality, than that of setting fire to the exquisite temple of Diana. He *was* remembered indeed, as he desired to be, but it was only to be execrated; while the seventh wonder of the world lay prostrate through his crime.

But too often that daring boldness which excites admiration, is not energy, is not virtue, is not genius. It is blindness in the judgment, is vanity in the heart. Strong and unprecedented measures, plans instantaneously conceived, and

as rapidly executed, argue not ability but arrogance. A mind continually driven out in quest of presumptuous novelties, is commonly a mind void of real resources within, and incapable of profiting from observation without. Sure principles cannot be ascertained without experiment, and experiment requires more time than the sanguine can spare, and more patience than the vain possess. In the crude speculations of these rash reformists, few obstructions occur. It is like taking a journey, not on a road, but on a map. Difficulties are unseen, or are kept in the back ground. Impossibilities are smothered, or rather they are not suffered to be born. Nothing is felt but the ardour of enterprise, nothing is seen but the certainty of success. Whereas if difficulties grow out of sober experiment, the disappointments attending them generate humility; the failures inseparable from the best concerted human undertakings, serve at once to multiply resources, and to excite self-distrust; while ideal projectors, and actual demolishers, are the most conceited of mortals. It never occurs to them that those defects of old institutions, on which they frame their objections, are equally palpable to all other men. It never occurs to them that frenzy can demolish faster than wisdom can build; that pulling down the strongest edifice is far more easy than the reconstruction of the meanest, that the most ignorant labourer is competent to the one, while for the other the skill of the architect, and the patient industry of the workman must unite. That a sound judgment will profit by the errors of our predecessors, as well as by their excellences. That there is a retrospective wisdom to which much of our prospective wisdom owes its birth; and that after all, neither the perfection pretended, nor the pride which accompanies the pretension, 'is made for man.'

It is the same over-ruling vanity which operates in their politics, and in their religion which makes Kersaint* boast of carrying his destructive projects from the Tagus to the Brazils, and from Mexico to the shores of the Ganges; which makes him menace to outstrip the enterprise of the most extravagant hero of romance, and almost undertake with the marvellous celerity of the nimble-footed Puck,

> 'To put a girdle round about the earth
> In forty minutes.'—

It is the same vanity, still the master-passion in the bosom of a Frenchman, which leads Dupont and Manuel to undertake in their orations to abolish the Sabbath, to exterminate the priesthood, to erect a pantheon for the world, to restore the peripatetic philosophy, and in short to revive every thing of ancient Greece, except the pure taste, the profound wisdom, the love of virtue, the veneration of the laws, and that high degree of reverence which even virtuous Pagans profess for the Deity.

It is the same spirit of novelty, and the same hostility to established opinions, which dictate the preposterous and impious doctrine that *death is an eternal sleep.* The prophets and apostles assert the contrary. David expressly says, 'when I *awake* up after thy likeness I shall be satisfied;' implying that our true life will begin at our departure out of this world. The destruction or dissolution of the body will be the revival, not the death, of the soul.—It is to the *living* the apostle says, '*awake* thou that *sleepest,* and arise from the DEAD, and Christ shall give thee light.'

It is surely to be charged to the inadequate and wretched hands into which the work of reformation fell, and not to the impossibility of amending the civil and religious institutions of France, that all has succeeded so ill. It cannot be denied perhaps, that a reforming spirit was wanted in that country; their government was not more despotic, than their church was superstitious and corrupt.

But though this is readily granted, and though it may be unfair to blame those who in the *first outset* of the French revolution, rejoiced even on religious motives: yet it is astonishing, how any pious person, even with all the blinding power of prejudice, can think without horror of the *present* state of France. It is no less wonderful how any rational man could, even in the beginning of the revolution, transfer that reasoning, however just it might be, when applied to France, to the case of England. For what can be more unreasonable, than to draw from different and even opposite premises, the same conclusion? Must a revolution be equally necessary in the case of two sorts of government, and two sorts of religion, which are the very reverse of each other?—opposite in their genius, unlike in their fundamental principles, and completely different in each of their component parts.

That despotism, priestcraft, intolerance, and superstition are terrible evils, no candid Christian it is presumed will deny; but, blessed be God, though these mischiefs are not yet entirely banished from the face of the earth, they have scarcely any existence in this happy country.

To guard against a real danger, and to cure actual abuses, of which the existence has been first plainly proved, by the application of a suitable remedy, requires diligence as well as courage; observation as well as genius; patience and temperance as well as zeal and spirit. It requires the union of that clear head and sound heart which constitute the true patriot. But to conjure up fancied evils; or even greatly to aggravate real ones; and then to exhaust our labour in combating them, is the characteristic of a distempered imagination and an ill governed spirit.

Romantic crusades, the ordeal trial, drowning of witches, the torture, and the inquisition, have been justly reprobated as the foulest stains of the respective periods in which, to the disgrace of human reason, they existed; but would any man be rationally employed, who should now stand up gravely to declaim against these as the predominating mischiefs of the present century? Even the whimsical knight of La Mancha himself, would not fight wind-mills that were pulled down; yet I will venture to say, that the above-named evils are at present little more chimerical than some of those now so bitterly complained of among us

* See his speech enumerating their intended projects.

It is not as Dryden said, when one of his works was unmercifully abused, that the piece has not faults enough in it, but the critics have not had the wit to fix upon the right ones.

It is allowed that, as a nation, we do not want faults; but our political critics err in the objects of their censure. They say little of those real and pressing evils resulting from our own corruption, of that depravity which constitutes the actual miseries of life; while they gloomily speculate upon a thousand imaginary political grievances, and fancy that the reformation of our rulers and our legislatures is all that is wanting to make us a happy people. Alas!

> How small, of all that human hearts endure,
> That part, which kings or laws can cause or cure.

The principles of just and equitable government were, perhaps, never more fully established, nor was public justice ever more exactly administered. Pure and undefiled religion was never laid more open to all, than at this day. I wish I could say we were a religious people; but this at least may be safely asserted, that the great truths of religion were never better understood; that Christianity was never more completely stripped from all its incumbrances and disguises, or more thoroughly purged from human infusions, and from whatever is debasing in human institutions, than it is at this day in this country.

In vain we look around us to discover the ravages of religious tyranny, or the triumphs of priestcraft or superstition. Who attempts to impose any yoke upon our reason? Who seeks to put any blind on the eyes of the most illiterate? Who fetters the judgment or enslaves the conscience of the meanest of our Protestant brethren? Nay, such is the power of pure Christianity, that genuine Christianity, which is exhibited in our liturgy to enlighten the understanding, as well as to reform the heart, and such are the advantages which the most abject in this country possess for enjoying its privileges, that the poorest peasant among us, if he be as religious as multitudes of his station really are, has clear ideas of God and his own soul, purer notions of that true liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, than the mere disputer of this world, though he possess every splendid advantage which education, wisdom, and genius can bestow. I am not speaking either of a *perfect* form of government, or of a *perfect* church establishment, because I am speaking of institutions which are human; and the very idea of their being human involves also the idea of imperfection. But I am speaking of the best constituted government, and the best constituted national church, with which the history of mankind is yet acquainted. Time, that silent instructor, and experience, that great rectifier of the judgment, will more and more discover to us what is wanting to the perfection of both. And if we may trust to the active genius of Christian liberty, and to that liberal and candid spirit which is the characteristic of the age we live in, there is little doubt but that a temperate and well regulated zeal will, at a convenient season, correct whatsoever sound policy shall suggest as wise and expedient to be corrected.

If there are errors in the church, and it does not perhaps require the sharp-sightedness of a keen observer to discover that there are, there is at least nothing like fierce intolerance, or spiritual usurpation. A fiery zeal and uncharitable bigotry might have furnished matter for a well deserved ecclesiastical philipic in other times; but thanks to the temper of the present day, unless we conjure up a spirit of religious chivalry, and sally forth in quest of imaginary evils, we shall not apprehend any danger from persecution or enthusiasm. If grievances there are, they do not appear to be those which result from polemic pride, and rigid bigotry, but are of a kind far different.

If the warm sun of prosperity has unhappily produced its too common effect, in relaxing the vigour of religious exertion; if, in too many instances, security has engendered sloth, and affluence produced dissipation; let us implore the Divine grace, that the present alarming crisis may rouse the careless, and quicken the supine; that our pastors may be convinced that the Church has less to fear from external violence, than from internal decay; nay, that even the violence of attack is often really beneficial, by exciting that activity which enables us to repel danger, and that increase of diligence is the truest accession of strength. May they be convinced that the love of power, with which their enemies perhaps unjustly accuse them, is not more fatal than the love of pleasure; that no stoutness of orthodoxy in opinion can atone for a too close assimilation with the manners of the world; that heresy without, is less to be dreaded than indifference from within; that the most regular clerical education, the most scrupulous attention to forms, and even the strictest conformity to the established discipline and opinions of the Church, will avail but little to the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, without a strict spirit of personal watchfulness, habitual self-denial, and laborious exertion.

Though it is not here intended to animadvert on any political complaint which is not in some sort connected with religion; yet it is presumed it may not be thought quite foreign to the present purpose to remark, that among the reigning complaints against our civil administration, the most plausible seems to be that excited by the supposed danger of an invasion on the liberty of the press.—Were this apprehension well founded, we should indeed be threatened by one of the most grievous misfortunes that can befall a free country. The liberty of the press is not only a most noble privilege itself, but the guardian of all our other liberties and privileges, and, notwithstanding the abuse which has lately been made of this valuable possession, yet every man of a sound unprejudiced mind is well aware that true liberty of every kind is scarcely inferior in importance to any object for which human activity can contend. Nay, the very abuse of a good, often makes us more sensible of the value of the good itself. Fair and well-proportioned freedom will ever retain all her native beauty to a judicious eye, nor will the genuine loveliness of her form be the less prized

for our having lately contemplated the distorted features and false colouring of her caricature, as presented to us by the daubing hand of Gallic patriots.

But highly as the freedom of the press ought to be valued, would it really be so very heavy a misfortune, if corrupt and inflaming publications, calculated to destroy that virtue which every good man is anxious to preserve, that peace which every honest man is struggling to secure, should, just at this alarming period, be somewhat difficult to be obtained? Would it be so very grievous a national calamity, if the crooked progeny of treason and blasphemy should find it a little inconvenient to venture forth from their lurking holes, and range abroad in open day? Is the cheapness of poison, or the facility with which it may be obtained, to be reckoned among the real advantages of medicinal repositories? And can the easiness of access to seditious or atheistical writings, be seriously numbered among the substantial blessings of any country? Would France, at this day, have had much solid cause of regret, if most of the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, and d'Alembert (the prolific seed of their wide-spreading tree) had found more difficulty in getting into the world, or been less profusely circulated when in it? And might not England at this moment have been just as happy in her ignorance, if the famous orations of citizen Dupont and citizen Manuel, had been confined to their own enlightened and philosophical countries?*

To return to these orations:—We have too often, in our own nation, seen and deplored the mischiefs of irreligion, arising incidentally from a neglected or an abused education. But what mischiefs will not irreligion produce, when, in the projected schools of France, as announced to us by the two metaphysical legislators above mentioned, impiety shall be taught by system? When out of the mouths of babes and sucklings the monstrous opinions, exhibited by Dupont and Manuel, shall be perfected? When the fruits of atheism dropping from their newly planted tree of liberty, shall pollute the very fountains of knowledge? When education being poisoned in all her springs, the rising generation shall be taught to look on atheism as decorous, and Christianity as eccentric? When atheism shall be considered as a proof of accomplished breeding, and religion as the stamp of a vulgar education? When the regular course of obedience to masters and tutors will consist in renouncing the hope of everlasting happiness, and in deriding the idea of future punishment? When every man and every child, in conformity with the principles professed in the convention, shall presume to say with his tongue, what hitherto even the fool has only dared to say in heart, *That there is no God.**

Christianity, which involves the whole duty of man, divides that duty into two portions—the love of God and the love of our neighbour. Now, as these two principles have their being from the same source, and derive their vitality from the union; so impiety furnishes the direct converse—That atheism which destroys all belief in, and of course cuts off all love of, and communion with God, disqualifies for the due performance of the duties of civil and social life. There is, in its way, the same consistency, agreement and uniformity, between the principles which constitute an infidel and a bad member of society, as there is between giving 'glory to God in the highest,' and exercising 'peace and good will to men.'

My fellow Christians! This is not a strife of words; this is not a controversy about opinions of comparatively small importance, such as you have been accustomed at home to hear even good men dispute upon, when perhaps they would have acted a more wise and amiable part had they remained silent, sacrificing their mutual differences on the altar of Christian charity: But this bold renunciation of the first great fundamental article of faith, this daring rejection of the Supreme Creator and Ruler of the world, is laying the axe and striking with a vigorous stroke at the root of all human happiness. It is tearing up the very foundation of human hope, and extirpating every true principle of human excellence. It is annihilating the very existence of virtue, by annihilating its motives, its sanctions, its obligations, its object, and its end.

That atheism will be the favoured and the popular tenet in France seems highly probable; whilst in the wild contempt of all religion, which has lately had the arrogance to call itself toleration, it is not improbable that christianity itself may be tolerated in that country, as a sect not persecuted perhaps, but derided. It is, however, far from clear, that this will be the case, if the new doctrines should become generally

* Extract from Mons. Manuel's Letter to the National Convention, dated January 26 1793.

'The priests of a republic are its magistrates, the law its gospel What mission can be more august than that of the instructors of youth, who having themselves escaped from the hereditary prejudice of all sects, point out to the human race their inalienable rights, founded upon that sublime wisdom which pervades all nature. Religious faith impressed on the mind of an infant seven years old, will lead to perfect slavery: or dogmas at that age are only arbitrary commands. Ah! what is belief without examination, without conviction. It renders men either melancholy or mad, &c.

'Legislators! Virtue wants neither temples nor synagogues It is not from priests we learn to do good or noble actions. No religion must be taught in schools which are to be national ones To prescribe one would be to prefer it to all others —There history must speak of sects, as she speaks of other events. It would become your wisdom, perhaps, to order that the pupils of the republic should not enter the temples before the age of seventeen. Reason must be taken by surprise, &c. Hardly were children born before they fell into the hands of priests, who first blinded their eyes, and then delivered them over to kings. Wherever kings cease to govern, priests must cease to educate'

* It is a remarkable circumstance, that though the French are continually binding themselves by oaths, they have not mentioned the name of God in any oath which has been invented since the revolution. It may also appear curious to the English readers, that though in almost all the addresses of congratulation, which were sent by the associated clubs from this country to the National Convention, the success of the French arms was in part ascribed to Divine providence, yet in none of the answers was the least notice ever taken of this. And to show how the same spirit spreads itself among every description of men in France, their admiral Latouche, after having described the dangers to which his ship was exposed in a storm, says, 'we owe our existence to the tutelary Genius which watches over the destiny of the French republic, and the defenders of liberty and equality'

prevalent. Atheists are not without their bigotry; they too have their spirit of exclusion and monopoly in a degree not inferior to the most superstitious monks. And that very spirit of intolerance which is now so much the object of their invective, would probably be no less the rule of their practice, if their will should ever be backed by power. It is true that Voltaire and the other great apostles of infidelity have employed all the acuteness of their wit to convince us that irreligion never persecutes. To prove this, every art of false citation, partial extract, suppressed evidence, and gross misrepresentation, has been put in practice. But if this unsupported assertion were true, then Polycarp, Ignatius, Justin, Cyprian, and Basil, did not suffer for the faith once delivered to the saints. Then the famous Christian apologists, most of them learned converts from the pagan philosophy, idly employed their zeal to abate a clamour which did not exist, and to propitiate emperors who did not persecute. Then Tacitus, Trajan, Pliny, and Julian, those bitter enemies to Christianity, are suborned witnesses on her side. Then ecclesiastical history is a series of falsehoods, and the book of martyrs a legend of romance.*

That one extravagant mischief should produce its opposite, is agreeable to the ordinary course of human events. That to the credulity of a dark and superstitious religion, a wanton contempt of all decency, and an unbridled profaneness should succeed, that to a government absolutely despotic, an utter abhorrence of all restraint and subordination should follow, though it is deplorable, yet it is not strange. The human mind in flying from the extreme verge of one error, seldom stops till she has reached the opposite extremity. She generally passes by with a lofty disdain the obvious truth which lies directly in her road, and which is indeed commonly to be found in the midway, between the error she is flying from, and the error she is pursuing.

Is it a breach of Christian charity to conclude, from a view of the present state of the French, that since that deluded people have given up GOD, GOD, by a righteous retribution, seems to have renounced them for a time, and to have given them over to their own heart's lust, *to work iniquity with greediness?* If such is their present career, what is likely to be their appointed end? How fearfully applicable to them seems that awful denunciation against an ancient, offending people—'The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart.'

It is no part of the present design to enter into a detail of their political conduct; but I cannot omit to remark, that the very man in their long list of kings who seemed best to have deserved their assumed application of *most Christian*, was also most favourable to their acquisition of liberty:* his moderation and humanity facilitated their plans and increased their power, which, with unparalleled ingratitude, they employed to degrade his person and character in the eyes of mankind, by the blackest and most detestable arts, and at length to terminate his calamities by a crime which has excited the grief and indignation of all Europe.

On the trial and murder of that most unfortunate king, and on the inhuman proceedings which accompanied them, I shall purposely avoid dwelling, for it is not the design of these remarks to excite the passions. I will only say, that so monstrous has been the inversion of all order, law, humanity, justice, received opinion, good faith, and religion, that the conduct of his bloody executioners seems to have exhibited the most scrupulous conformity with the principles announced in the speeches we have been considering. In this one instance we must not call the French an inconsequent people. Savage brutality, rapine, treason and murder have been the noxious fruit gathered from these thorns; the baneful produce of these thistles. An overturn of all morals has been the well-proportioned offspring of a subversion of all principle.

But, notwithstanding the consistency, in this instance, between cause and consequence; so new and surprising have been the turns in their extraordinary projects, that to foretell what their next enterprize would be from what their last has been, has long baffled all calculation, has long bid defiance to all conjecture. Analogy from history, the study of past events, and an investigation of present principles and passions: judgment, memory, comparison, combination and deduction, afford human sagacity but very slender assistance in its endeavours to develope their future plans. We have not even the data of consistent wickedness on which to build rational conclusions. Their crimes, though visibly connected by uniform depravity, are yet so surprisingly diversified by interfering absurdities, as to furnish no ground on which reasonable argument can be founded. Nay, such is their incredible eccentricity, that it is hardly extravagant to affirm, that improbability is become rather an additional reason for expecting any given event to take place.

But let us, in this yet happy country, learn at least one great and important truth from the errors of this distracted people. Their conduct has always illustrated a position, which is not the less sound for having been often controverted—That no degree of wit and learning, no progress in commerce, no advances in the knowledge of nature, or in the embellishments of art, can ever thoroughly tame that savage, the *natural human heart*, without RELIGION. The arts of social life may give sweetness to manners, and grace to language, and induce, in some degree, a respect for justice, truth, and humanity; but attainments derived from such inferior causes are no more than the semblance and the shadow of the qualities derived from pure Christianity. Varnish is an extraneous ornament, but true

* It may be objected here, that this is not applicable to the state of France; for that the Roman emperors were not atheists or deists, but polytheists, with an established religion. To this it may be answered, that modern infidels not only deny the ten pagan persecutions, but accuse Christianity of being the only persecuting religion; and affirm that only those who refuse to embrace it discover a spirit of toleration.

* Of this the French themselves were so well persuaded, that the title of *Restorateur de la liberte Francoise*, was solemnly given to Louis XVIth by the Constituent Assembly.

polish is a proof of the solidity of the body on whose surface it is produced. It depends greatly on the nature of the substance, is not superinduced by accidental causes, but in a good measure proceeds from internal soundness.

The poets of that classic country, whose style, sentiments, manners, and religion, the French so affectedly labour to imitate, have left keen and biting satires on the Roman vices. Against the late proceedings in France, no satirist need employ his pen; that of the historian will be quite sufficient. Truth will be the severest satire; fact will put fable out of countenance; and the crimes which are usually held up to our abhorrence, and are rejected for their exaggeration in works of invention, will be regarded as flat and feeble by those who shall peruse the records of the tenth of August, of the second and third of September, and of the twenty-first of January.

If the same astonishing degeneracy in taste, principle, and practice, should ever come to flourish among *us*, Britain may still live to exult in the desolation of her cities, and in the destruction of her finest monuments of art; she may triumph in the peopling of the fortresses of her rocks and her forests; may exult in being once more restored to that glorious state of *liberty and equality*, when all subsisted by rapine and the chase; when all, O enviable privilege! were equally savage, equally indigent, and equally naked; her sons may extol it as the restoration of reason, the triumph of nature, and the consummation of liberty, that they are again brought to feed on acorns, instead of bread! Groves of consecrated misletoe may happily succeed to useless cornfields; and Thor and Woden may hope once more to be invested with all their bloody honours

Let not any serious reader feel indignation, as if pains were ungenerously taken to involve their religious with their political opinions. Far be it from me to wound, unnecessarily, the feelings of a people, many of whom are truly estimable: but it is much to be suspected, that certain opinions in politics have a tendency to lead to certain opinions in religion. Where so much is at stake, they will do well to keep their consciences tender, in order to which they should try to keep their discernment acute. They will do well to observe, that the same restless spirit of innovation is busily operating under various, though seemingly unconnected forms; to observe, that the same impatience of restraint, the same contempt of order, peace, and subordination, which makes men bad citizens, makes them bad Christians; and that to this secret and almost infallible connexion between religious and political sentiment, does France owe her present unparalleled anarchy and impiety.

There are doubtless in that unhappy country multitudes of virtuous and reasonable men, who rather silently acquiesce in the authority of their present turbulent government, than embrace its principles or promote its projects from the sober conviction of their own judgment. These, together with those conscientious exiles whom this nation so honourably protects, may yet live to rejoice in the restoration of true liberty and solid peace to their native country, when light and order shall spring from the present darkness and confusion, and the reign of chaos shall be no more.

May I be permitted a short digression on the subject of the conduct of Great Britain to these exiles? It shall only be to remark, that all the boasted conquests of our Edwards and our Henrys over the French nation, do not confer such substantial glory on our own country, as she derives from having received, protected, and supported among innumerable multitudes of other sufferers, at a time and under circumstances so peculiarly disadvantageous to herself, *three thousand priests*, of a nation habitually her enemy, and of a religion intolerant and hostile to her own. This is the solid triumph of true Christianity; and it is worth remarking, that the deeds which poets and historians celebrate as rare and splendid actions; which they record as sublime instances of greatness of soul, in the heroes of the pagan world, are but the ordinary and habitual virtues which occur in the common course of action among Christians; quietly performing without effort or exertion, and with no view to renown or reward; but resulting naturally and consequently from the religion to which they belong.

So predominating is the power of an example we have once admired, and set up as a standard of imitation, and so fascinating has been the ascendency of the convention over the minds of those whose approbation of French politics commenced in the earlier periods of the revolution, that it extends to the most trivial circumstances. I cannot forbear to notice this in an instance which, though inconsiderable in itself, yet ceases to be so when we view it in the light of a prevailing symptom of the reigning disease.

While the fantastic phraseology of the new republic is such, as to be almost as disgusting to sound taste as their doctrines are to sound morals, it is curious to observe how deeply the addresses, which have been sent to it from the clubs* in this country, have been infected with it, as far at least as phrases and terms are objects of imitation. In the more leading points it is but justice to the French convention to confess, that they are hitherto without rivals and without imitators; for who can aspire to emulate that compound of anarchy and atheism which in their debates is mixed up with the pedantry of a school-boy, the jargon of a cabal, and the vulgarity and ill-breeding of a mob? One instance of the prevailing cant may suffice, where a hundred might be adduced, and it is not the most exceptionable. To demolish every existing law and establishment; to destroy the fortunes and ruin the principles of every country into which they are carrying their destructive arms and their frantic doctrines; to untie or cut asunder every bond which holds society together; to impose their own arbitrary shackles where they succeed, and to demolish every thing where they fail. This desolating system, by a most unaccountable perversion of language, they are pleased to call by the endearing name of *fraternization*; and fraternization is one of the favourite terms which their admirers in this country have adopted. Little would a simple

* See the collection of addresses from England

stranger, uninitiated in this new and surprising dialect, uninstructed by the political lexicographers of modern France, imagine that the peaceful terms of *fellow-citizen* and of *brother*, the winning offer of *freedom* and *happiness*, and the warm embrace of *fraternity*, were only watchwords by which they, in effect,

Cry havoc,
And let slip the dogs of war.

In numberless other instances, the fashionable language of France at this day would be as unintelligible to the correct writers of the age of Louis the XIV. as their fashionable notions of liberty would be irreconcilable with those of the true revolution patriots of his great contemporary and victorious rival William the Third.

Such is indeed their puerile rage for novelty in the invention of new words, and the perversion of their taste in the use of old ones, that the celebrated Vossius, whom Christiana of Sweden oddly complimented by saying, that he was so learned as not only to know whence all words came, but whither they were going, would, *were he admitted to the honour of a sitting*, be obliged to confess, that he was equally puzzled to tell the one, as to foretel the other.

If it shall please the Almighty in his anger to let loose this infatuated people, as a scourge for the iniquities of the human race; if they are delegated by infinite justice to act 'as storm and tempest fulfilling his word,' if they are commissioned to perform the errand of the destroying lightning or the avenging thunderbolt, let us try at least to extract personal benefit from a national calamity; let every one of us, high and low, rich and poor, enter upon this serious and humbling inquiry, how much his own individual offences have contributed to that awful aggregate of public guilt, which has required such a visitation. Let us carefully examine in what proportion we have separately added to that common stock of abounding iniquity, the description of which formed the character of an ancient nation, and is so peculiarly applicable to our own—*Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness.* Let every one of us humbly inquire, in the self-suspecting language of the disciples of their Divine Master—*Lord, is it I?* Let us learn to fear the fleets and armies of the enemy, much less than those iniquities at home, which this alarming dispensation may be intended to chastise.

The war which the French had declared against us, is of a kind altogether unexampled in every respect; insomuch that human wisdom is baffled when it would pretend to conjecture what may be the event. But this at least we may safely say, that it is not so much the force of French bayonets, as the contamination of French principles, that ought to excite our apprehensions. We trust, that through the blessing of God we shall be defended from their open hostilities, by the temperate wisdom of our rulers, and the bravery of our fleets and armies; but the domestic danger arising from licentious and irreligious principles among ourselves, can only be guarded against by the personal care and vigilance of every one of us who values religion and the good order of society in this world and an eternity of happiness in the next.

God grant that those who go forth to fight our battles, instead of being intimidated by the number of their enemies, may bear in mind, that 'there is no restraint with God to save by many or by few.' And let the meanest among us who remains at home remember also, that even he may contribute to the internal safety of the country, by the integrity of his private life, and to the success of her defenders, by following them with his fervent prayers. And in what war can the sincere Christian ever have stronger inducements and more reasonable encouragement to pray for the success of his country, than in this? Without entering far into any political principles, the discussion of which would be in a great measure foreign to the design of this little tract, it may be remarked, that the unchristian principle of *revenge* is not our motive to this war; *conquest* is not our object; nor have we had recourse to hostility in order to effect a change in the internal government of France.* The present war is undoubtedly undertaken entirely on defensive principles. It is in defence of our king, our constitution, our religion, our laws, and consequently our *liberty*, in the sound, sober, and rational sense of that term. It is to defend ourselves from the savage violence of a crusade, made against all religion, as well as all government. If ever therefore a war was undertaken on the ground of self-defence and necessity—if ever men might be *liberally* said to fight *pro* ARIS *et* FOCIS, this seems to be the occasion.

The ambition of conquerors has been the source of great and extensive evils: religious fanaticism, of still greater. But little as I am disposed to become the apologist of either the one principle or the other, there is no extravagance in asserting, that they have seemed incapable of producing, even in ages, that extent of mischief, that variety of ruin, that comprehensive desolation, which *philosophy, falsely so called*, has produced in three years.

Christians! it is not a small thing—*it is your life!* The pestilence of irreligion which you detest, will insinuate itself imperceptibly with those manners, phrases, and principles which you admire and adopt. It is the humble wisdom of a Christian, to shrink from the most distant approaches of sin: to abstain from the very appearance of evil. If we would fly from the deadly contagion of atheism, let us fly from those seemingly remote but not very indirect paths which lead to it. Let France choose this day whom she will serve; *but as for us and our houses, we will serve the Lord.*

And, O gracious and long-suffering God! before that awful period arrives, which shall exhibit the dreadful effects of such an education as the French nation are instituting; before a race of men can be trained up, not only without the knowledge of Thee, but in the contempt of Thy most holy law, do Thou, in great mercy change the heart of this people as the heart of one man. Give them not finally over to their own corrupt imaginations, to their own heart's lusts. But after having made them a fearful

* See the report of Mr. Pitt's speech in the House of Commons, on February 12, 1793, published by Woodfall.

example to all the nations of the earth, what a people *can* do, who have cast off the fear of Thee, do Thou graciously bring them back to a sense of that law which they have violated, and to a participation of that mercy which they have abused; so that they may happily find, while the discovery can be attended with hope and consolation, that *doubtless there is a reward for the righteous; verily, there is a God who judgeth the earth.*

STRICTURES

ON THE MODERN SYSTEM OF FEMALE EDUCATION

WITH A VIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES AND CONDUCT PREVALENT AMONG WOMEN OF RANK AND FORTUNE.

May you so raise your character that you may help to make the next age a better thing, and leave posterity in your debt, for the advantage it shall receive by your example.—*Lord Halifax.*

Domestic happiness, thou only bliss
Of Paradise that has survived the Fall!
Thou art not known where PLEASURE is ador'd,
That reeling goddess with the zoneless waist.
Forsaking thee, what shipwreck have we made
Of honour, dignity, and fair renown!—*Cowper.*

INTRODUCTION.

It is a singular injustice which is often exercised towards women, first to give them a very defective education, and then to expect from them the most undeviating purity of conduct—to train them in such a manner as shall lay them open to the most dangerous faults, and then to censure them for not proving faultless. Is it not unreasonable and unjust to express disappointment if our daughters should, in their subsequent lives, turn out precisely that very kind of character for which it would be evident to an unprejudiced by-stander that the whole scope and tenor of their instruction had been systematically preparing them?

Some reflections on the present erroneous system are here with great deference submitted to public consideration. The author is apprehensive that she shall be accused of betraying the interests of her sex by laying open their defects: but surely an earnest wish to turn their attention to objects calculated to promote their true dignity, is not the office of an enemy. So to expose the weakness of the land as to suggest the necessity of internal improvement, and to point out the means of effectual defence, is not treachery, but patriotism.

Again, it may be objected to this little work, that many errors are here ascribed to women which by no means belongs to them *exclusively*, and that it seems to confine to the sex those faults which are common to the species: but this is in some measure unavoidable. In speaking on the qualities of one sex, the moralist is somewhat in the situation of the geographer, who is treating on the nature of one country: the air, soil, and produce of the land which he is describing, cannot fail in many essential points to resemble those of other countries under the same parallel; yet it is his business to descant on the one without adverting to the other; and though in drawing the map he may happen to introduce some of the neighbouring coast, yet his principal attention must be confined to that country which he proposes to describe, without taking into account the resembling circumstances of the adjacent shores.

It may be also objected that the opinion here suggested on the state of manners among the higher classes of our countrywomen, may seem to controvert the just encomiums of modern travellers, who generally concur in ascribing a decided superiority to the ladies of this country over those of every other. But such is, in general, the state of foreign manners, that the comparative praise is almost an injury to *English* women. To be flattered for excelling those whose standard of excellence is very low, is but a degrading kind of commendation; for the value of all praise derived from superiority, depends on the worth of the competitor. The character of British ladies, with all the unparalleled advantages they possess, must never be determined by comparison with the women of other nations, but by comparing them with what they themselves might be if all their talents and unrivalled opportunities were turned to the best account.

Again, it may be said, that the author is less disposed to expatiate on excellence than error: but the office of the historian of human manners is delineation rather than panegyric. Were the end in view eulogium and not improvement, eulogium would have been far more gratifying, nor would just objects for praise have been difficult to find. Even in her own limited sphere of observation, the author is acquainted with much excellence in the class of which she treats—with women who, possessing learning which would be thought extensive in the other sex, set an example of deep humility to their own—women who, distinguished for wit and genius, are eminent

for domestic qualities—who, excelling in the fine arts, have carefully enriched their understandings—who, enjoying great influence, devote it to the glory of God—who, possessing elevated rank, think their noblest style and title is that of a Christian.

That there is also much worth which is little known, she is persuaded; for it is the modest nature of goodness to exert itself quietly, while a few characters of the opposite cast seem, by the rumour of their exploits, to fill the world; and by their noise to multiply their numbers. It often happens that a very small party of people, by occupying the foreground, by seizing the public attention and monopolizing the public talk, contrive to appear to be the great body: a few active spirits, provided their activity take the wrong turn, and support the wrong cause, seem to fill the scene; and a few disturbers of order, who have the talent of thus exciting a false idea of their multitudes by their mischiefs, actually gain strength, and swell their numbers, by this fallacious arithmetic.

But the present work is no more intended for a panegyric on those purer characters who seek not human praise because they act from a higher motive, than for a satire on the avowedly licentious, who, urged by the impulse of the moment, resist no inclination; and led away by the love of fashion, dislike no censure, so it may serve to rescue them from neglect or oblivion.

There are, however, multitudes of the young and the well disposed, who have as yet taken no decided part, who are just launching on the ocean of life, just about to lose their own right convictions, virtually preparing to counteract their better propensities, and unreluctantly yielding themselves to be carried down the tide of popular practices: sanguine, thoughtless, and confident of safety.—To these the author would gently hint, that when once embarked, it will be no longer easy to say to their passions, or even to their principles, 'Thus far shall ye go, and no further.' Their struggles will grow fainter, their resistance will become feebler, till borne down by the confluence of example, temptation, appetite, and habit, resistance and opposition will soon be the only things of which thy will learn to be ashamed.

Should any reader revolt at what is conceived to be unwarranted strictness in this little book, let it not be thrown by in disgust before the following short consideration be weighed.—If in this christian country we are actually beginning to regard the solemn office of Baptism as merely furnishing an article to the parish register—if we are learning from our indefatigable teachers, to consider this Christian rite as a legal ceremony retained for the sole purpose of recording the *age* of our children;—then, indeed, the prevaling system of education and manners of which these pages presume to animadvert may be adopted with propriety, and persisted in with safety, without entailing on our children or on ourselves the peril of broken promises or the guilt of violated vows—But, if the obligation which christian Baptism imposes be really binding—if the ordinance have, indeed, a meaning beyond a mere secular transaction, beyond a record of names and dates—if it be an institution by which the child is solemnly devoted to God as his Father, to Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and to the Holy Spirit as his sanctifier; if there be no definite period assigned when the obligation of fulfilling the duties it enjoins shall be superseded—if, having once dedicated our offspring to their Creator, we no longer dare to mock Him by bringing them up in ignorance of His will and neglect of His laws—if, after having enlisted them under the banners of Christ, to fight manfully against the three great enemies of mankind, we are no longer at liberty to let them lay down their arms; much less to lead them to act as if they were in alliance, instead of hostility with these enemies—if, after having promised that they shall renounce the vanities of the world, we are not allowed to invalidate the engagement—if, after such a covenant we should tremble to make these renounced vanities, the supreme object of our own pursuit or of *their* instruction—if all this be really so, then the Strictures on Modern Education, and on the Habits of Polished Life, will not be found so repugnant to truth, and reason, and common sense, as may on a first view be supposed.

But if on candidly summing up the evidence, the design and scope of the author be fairly judged, not by the customs or opinions of the worldly (for every English subject has a right to object to a suspected or prejudiced jury) but by an appeal to that divine law which is the only infallible rule of judgment; if on such an appeal her views and principles shall be found censurable for their rigour, absurd in their requisitions, or preposterous in their restrictions, she will have no right to complain of such a verdict, because she will then stand condemned by that court to whose decision she implicitly submits.

Let it not be suspected that the author arrogantly conceives *herself* to be exempt from that natural corruption of the heart which it is one chief object of this slight work to exhibit; that she superciliously erects herself into the implacable censor of her sex and of the world, as if from the critic's chair she were coldly pointing out the faults and errors of another order of beings, in whose welfare she had not that lively interest which can only flow from the tender and intimate participation of fellow-feeling.

With a deep self-abasement, arising from a strong conviction of being indeed a partaker in the same corrupt nature; together with a full persuasion of the many and great defects of these pages, and a sincere consciousness of her inability to do justice to a subject which, however, a sense of duty impelled her to undertake, she commits herself to the candour of that public, which has so frequently, in her instance, accepted a right intention as a substitute for a powerful performance.

BATH, March 14, 1799.

STRICTURES

ON THE MODERN SYSTEM OF FEMALE EDUCATION.

CHAP. I.

Address to women of rank and fortune, on the effects of their influence on society.—Suggestions for the exertion of it in various instances.

AMONG the talents for the application of which women of the higher class will be peculiarly accountable, there is one, the importance of which they can scarcely rate too highly. This talent is influence. We read of the greatest orator of antiquity, that the wisest plans which it had cost him years to frame, a woman could overturn in a single day; and when we consider the variety of mischiefs which an ill-directed influence has been known to produce, we are led to reflect with the most sanguine hope on the beneficial effects to be expected from the same powerful force when exerted in its true direction.

The general state of civilized society depends, more than those are aware who are not accustomed to scrutinize into the springs of human action, on the prevailing sentiments and habits of women, and on the nature and degree of the estimation in which they are held. Even those who admit the power of female elegance on the manners of men, do not always attend to the influence of female principles on their character. In the former case, indeed, women are apt to be sufficiently conscious of their power, and not backward in turning it to account. But there are nobler objects to be effected by the exertion of their powers, and unfortunately, ladies, who are often unreasonably confident where they ought to be diffident, are sometimes capriciously diffident just when they ought to feel where their true importance lies; and feeling to exert it. To use their boasted power over mankind to no higher purpose than the gratification of vanity or the indulgence of pleasure, is the degrading triumph of those fair victims to luxury, caprice, and despotism, whom the laws and the religion of the voluptuous prophet of Arabia exclude from light, and liberty, and knowledge: and it is humbling to reflect, that in those countries in which fondness for the mere persons of women is carried to the highest excess, *they are slaves;* and that their moral and intellectual degradation increases in direct proportion to the adoration which is paid to mere external charms.

But I turn to the bright reverse of this mortifying scene; to a country where our sex enjoys the blessings of liberal instruction, of reasonable laws, of a pure religion, and all the endearing pleasures of an equal, social, virtuous, and delightful intercourse. I turn, with an earnest hope, that women thus richly endowed with the bounties of Providence, will not content themselves with polishing when they are able to reform; with entertaining when they may awaken; and with captivating for a day, when they may bring into action powers of which the effects may be commensurate with eternity.

In this moment of alarm and peril, I would call on them with a 'warning voice,' which should stir up every latent principle in their minds, and kindle every slumbering energy in their hearts: I would call on them to come forward, and contribute their full and fair proportion towards the saving of their country. But I would call on them to come forward, without departing from the refinement of their character, without derogating from the dignity of their rank, without blemishing the delicacy of their sex; I would call them to the best and most appropriate exertion of their power, to raise the depressed tone of public morals, and to awaken the drowsy spirit of religious principle. They know too well how arbitrarily they give the law to manners, and with how despotic a sway they fix the standard of fashion. But this is not enough; this is a low mark, a prize not worthy of their high and holy calling. For, on the use which women of the superior class may now be disposed to make of that power delegated to them by the courtesy of custom, by the honest gallantry of the heart, by the imperious control of virtuous affections, by the habits of civilized states, by the usages of polished society; on the use, I say, which they shall hereafter make of this influence, will depend, in no low degree, the well-being of those states, and the virtue and happiness, nay perhaps the very existence, of that society.

At this period when our country can only hope to stand by opposing a bold and noble *unanimity* to the most tremendous confederacies against religion, and order, and governments, which the world ever saw, what an accession would it bring to the public strength, could we prevail on beauty, and rank, and talents, and virtue, confederating their several powers, to exert themselves with a patriotism at once firm and feminine, for the general good! I am not sounding an alarm to female warriors, or exciting female politicians: I hardly know which of the two is the most disgusting and unnatural character. Propriety is to a woman what the great Roman critic says action is to an orator; it is the first, the second, the third requisite. A woman may be knowing, active, witty and amusing; but without propriety she cannot be amiable. Propriety is the centre in which all the lines of duty and of agreeableness meet. It is to character what proportion is to figure, and grace to attitude. It does not depend on any one perfection, but it is the result of general excellence. It shows itself by a regular, orderly, undeviating course; and never starts from its sober orbit into any splendid eccentricities; for it would be ashamed of such praise as it might extort by any deviations from its proper path. It renounces all commendation but what is characteristic; and I would make it the criterion of true taste, right principle, and genuine feeling, in a woman, whether she would be less touched with all the flattery of romantic and exaggerated panegyric than

with that beautiful picture of correct and elegant propriety which Milton draws of our first mother, when he delineates

> 'Those thousand *decencies* which daily flow
> From all her words and actions.'

Even the influence of religion is to be exercised with discretion. A female Polemic wanders nearly as far from the limits prescribed to her sex, as a female Machiavel or warlike Thalestris. Fierceness has made almost as few converts as the sword, and both are peculiarly ungraceful in a female. Even *religious* violence has human tempers of its own to indulge, and is gratifying itself when it would be thought to be serving God. Let not the bigot place her natural passions to the account of Christianity, or imagine she is pious when she is only passionate. Let her bear in mind that a Christian doctrine is always to be defended with a Christian spirit, and not make herself amends by the stoutness of her orthodoxy for the badness of her temper. Many, because they defend a religious opinion with pertinacity, seem to fancy that they thereby acquire a kind of right to withhold the meekness and obedience which should be necessarily involved in the principle.

But the character of a consistent Christian is as carefully to be maintained as that of a fiery disputant is to be avoided; and she who is afraid to avow her principles, or ashamed to defend them, has little claim to that honourable title. A profligate who laughs at the most sacred institutions and keeps out of the way of every thing which comes under the appearance of formal instruction, may be disconcerted by the modest, but spirited rebuke of a delicate woman, whose life adorns the doctrines which her conversation defends: but she who administers reproof with ill-breeding, defeats the effect of her remedy. On the other hand, there is a dishonest way of labouring to conciliate the favour of a whole company, though of characters and principles irreconcilably opposite. The words may be so guarded as not to shock the believer, while the eye and voice may be so accommodated, as not to discourage the infidel. She who, with a half-earnestness trims between the truth and the fashion; who while she thinks it creditable to defend the cause of religion, yet does it in a faint tone, a studied ambiguity of phrase, and a certain expression in her countenance, which proves that she is not displeased with what she affects to censure, or that she is afraid to lose her reputation for wit, in proportion as she advances her credit for piety, injures the cause more than he who attacked it, for she proves either that she does not believe what she professes, or that she does not reverence what fear compels her to believe. But this is not all: she is called on, not barely to repress impiety, but to excite, to encourage, and to cherish every tendency to serious religion.

Some of the occasions of contributing to the general good which are daily presenting themselves to ladies are almost too minute to be pointed out. Yet of the good which right minded women, anxiously watching these minute occasions, and adroitly seizing them, might accomplish we may form some idea by the ill effects which we actually see produced, through the mere levity, carelessness, and inattention (to say no worse) of some of those ladies who are looked up to as standards in the fashionable world.

I am persuaded if many a woman of fashion, who is now disseminating unintended mischief, under the dangerous notion that there is no harm in any thing short of positive vice, and under the false colours of that indolent humility, 'what good can *I* do?' could be brought to see in its collected force the annual aggregate of the random evil she is daily doing, by constantly throwing a *little* casual weight into the wrong scale, by a mere inconsiderate and unguarded chat, she would start from her self-complacent dream. If she could conceive how much she may be diminishing the good impressions of *young* men; and if she could imagine how little amiable levity or irreligion makes her appear in the eyes of those who are older and abler (however loose their own principles may be) she would correct herself in the first instance, from pure good nature; and in the second, from worldly prudence and mere self-love.—But on how much higher principles would she restrain herself, if she habitually took into account the important doctrine of consequences: and if she reflected that the lesser but more habitual corruptions make up by their number, what they may seem to come short of by their weight: then perhaps she would find, that among the higher class of women, *inconsideration* is adding more to the daily quantity of evil than almost all other causes put together.

There is an instrument of inconceivable force, when it is employed against the interest of Christianity: it is not reasoning, for that may be answered; it is not learning, for luckily the infidel is not seldom ignorant; it is not invective, for we leave so coarse an engine to the hands of the vulgar; it is not evidence, for happily we have that all on our side: it is RIDICULE, the most deadly weapon in the whole arsenal of impiety, and which becomes an almost unerring shaft when directed by a fair and fashionable hand. No maxim has been more readily adopted, or is more intrinsically false, than that which the fascinating eloquence of a noble sceptic of the last age contrived to render so popular, that 'ridicule is the test of truth.'* It is no test of truth itself; but of their firmness who assert the cause of truth, it is indeed a severe test. This light, keen, missile weapon, the irresolute, unconfirmed Christian will find it harder to withstand, than the whole heavy artillery of infidelity united.

A young man of the better sort, has perhaps just entered upon the world, with a certain share of good dispositions and right feelings; neither ignorant of the evidences, nor destitute of the principles of Christianity: without parting with his respect for religion, he sets out with the too natural wish of making himself a reputation and of standing well with the fashionable part of the female world. He preserves for a time a horror of vice, which makes it not difficult for him to resist the grosser corruptions of society; he can as yet repel profaneness; nay he can

* Lord Shaftesbury

withstand the banter of a club. He has sense enough to see through the miserable fallacies of the new philosophy, and spirit enough to expose its malignity. So far he does well, and you are ready to congratulate him on his security. You are mistaken: the principles of the ardent, and hitherto promising adventurer, are shaken, just in that very society where, while he was looking for pleasure, he doubted not of safety. In the company of certain women of good fashion and no ill fame, he makes shipwreck of his religion. He sees them treat with levity or derision subjects which he has been used to hear named with respect. He could confute an argument, he could unravel a sophistry; but he cannot stand a laugh. A sneer, not at the truth of religion, for that perhaps is by none of the party disbelieved, but at its gravity, its unseasonableness, its dulness, puts all his resolution to flight. He feels his mistake, and struggles to recover his credit; in order to which he adopts the gay affectations of trying to seem worse than he really is; he goes on to say things which he does not believe, and to deny things which he does believe; and all to efface the first impression, and to recover a reputation which he has committed to *their* hands, on whose report he knows he shall stand or fall, in those circles in which he is ambitious to shine.

That cold compound of irony, irreligion, selfishness, and sneer, which make up what the French (from whom we borrow the thing as well as the word) so well express by the term *persiflage*, has of late years made an incredible progress in blasting the opening buds of piety in young persons of fashion. A cold pleasantry, a temporary cant word, the jargon of the day (for the 'great vulgar' have their jargon) blights the first promise of seriousness. The ladies of *ton* have certain watch-words, which may be detected as indications of this spirit. The clergy are spoken of under the contemptuous appellation of *The Parsons*. Some ludicrous association is infallibly combined with the very idea of religion. If a warm hearted youth has ventured to name with enthusiasm some eminently pious character, his glowing ardour is extinguished with a laugh: and a drawling declaration, that the person in question is really a mighty *harmless* good creature, is uttered in a tone which leads the youth secretly to vow, that whatever else he may be, he will never be a good harmless creature.

Nor is ridicule more dangerous to true piety than to true taste. An age which values itself on parody, burlesque, irony, and caricature, produces little that is sublime, either in genius or in virtue; but they *amuse* and we live in an age which *must* be amused, though genius, feeling, truth, and principle be the sacrifice. Nothing chills the ardours of devotion like a frigid sarcasm; and, in the season of youth the mind should be kept particularly clear of all light associations. This is of so much importance, that I have known persons who, having been early accustomed to certain ludicrous combinations, were never liable to get their minds cleansed from the impurities contracted by this habitual levity, even after thorough reformation in their hearts and lives had taken place: their principles became reformed, but their imaginations were indelibly soiled. They could desist from sins which the strictness of Christianity would not allow them to commit, but they could not dismiss from their minds images which her purity forbade them to entertain.

There was a time when a variety of epithets were thought necessary to express various kinds of excellence, and when the different qualities of the mind were distinguished by appropriate and discriminating terms: when the words venerable, learned, sagacious, profound, acute, pious, worthy, ingenious, valuable, elegant, agreeable, wise, or witty, were used as specific marks of distinct characters. But the legislators of fashion have of late years thought proper to comprise all merit in one established epithet; an epithet which, it may be confessed, is a very desirable one as far as it goes. This term is exclusively and indiscriminately applied whenever commendation is intended. The word *pleasant* now serves to combine and express all moral and intellectual excellence. Every individual, from the gravest professors, of the gravest professions, down to the trifler who is of no profession at all, must earn the epithet of *pleasant*, or must be contented to be nothing; and must be consigned over to ridicule, under the vulgar and inexpressive cant word of a *bore*. This is the mortifying designation of many a respectable man, who, though of much worth and much ability, cannot perhaps clearly make out his letters patent to the title of *pleasant*. For according to this modern classification there is no intermediate state, but all are comprised within the ample bounds of one or other of these two comprehensive terms.

We ought to be more on our guard against this spirit of ridicule, because whatever may be the character of the present day, its faults do not spring from the redundancies of great qualities, or the overflowing of extravagant virtues. It is well if more correct views of life, a more regular administration of laws, and a more settled state of society, have helped to restrain the excesses of the heroic ages, when love and war were considered as the great and sole business of human life. Yet, if that period was marked by a romantic extravagance, and the present is distinguished by an indolent selfishness, our superiority is not so triumphantly decisive, as, in the vanity of our hearts we may be ready to imagine.

I do not wish to bring back the frantic reign of chivalry, nor to reinstate women in that fantastic empire in which they then sat enthroned in the hearts, or rather in the imaginations of men. Common sense is an excellent material of universal application, which the sagacity of latter ages has seized upon, and rationally applied to the business of common life. But let us not forget, in the insolence of acknowledged, superiority, that it was *religion* and *chastity*, operating on the romantic spirit of those *times*, which established the despotic sway of woman; and though in this altered scene of things, she now no longer looks down on her adoring votaries from the pedestal to which an absurd idolatry had lifted her: yet let her remember

that it is the same religion and the same chastity which once raised her to such an elevation, that must still furnish the noblest energies of her character, must still attract the admiration, still retain the respect of the other sex.

While we lawfully ridicule the absurdities which we have abandoned, let us not plume ourselves on that spirit of novelty which glories in the opposite extreme. If the manners of the period in question were affected, and if the gallantly was unnatural, yet the tone of virtue was high: and let us remember that constancy, purity, and honour, are not ridiculous in themselves, though they may unluckily be associated with qualities which are so: and women of delicacy would do well to reflect, when descanting on those exploded manners, how far it be decorous to deride with too broad a laugh, attachments which could subsist on remote gratifications; or grossly to ridicule the taste which led the admirer to sacrifice pleasure to respect, and inclination to honour; how far it be delicate to sneer at that purity which made self-denial a proof of affection; to call in question the sound understanding of him who preferred the fame of his mistress to his own indulgence; to burlesque that antiquated refinement which considered dignity and reserve as additional titles to affection and reverence.

We cannot but be struck with the wonderful contrast exhibited to our view, when we contemplate the opposite manners of the two periods in question. In the former all the flower of Europe smit with a delirious gallantry; all that was young, and noble, and brave, and great, with a frantic frenzy, and preposterous contempt of danger, traversed seas and scaled mountains and compassed a large portion of the globe, at the expense of ease, and fortune, and life, for the unprofitable project of rescuing, by force of arms, from the hands of infidels, the sepulchre of that Saviour, whom, *in the other period*, their posterity would think it the height of fanaticism so much as to name in good company. That Saviour, whose altars they desert, whose temples they neglect; and though in more than one country at least they still call themselves by his name, yet too many, it is to be feared, contemn his precepts, still more are ashamed of his doctrines, and not a few reject his sacrifice. Too many consider Christianity rather as a political than a religious distinction; too many claim the appellation of Christians, in mere opposition to that democracy with which they conceive infidelity to be associated, rather than from an abhorrence of impiety for its own sake; too many deprecate the charge of irreligion, as the supposed badge of a reprobated party, more than on account of that moral corruption which is its inseparable concomitant!

On the other hand, in an age when inversion is the character of the day, the modern idea of improvement does not consist in altering, but extirpating. We do not reform, but subvert. We do not correct old systems but demolish them, fancying that when every thing shall be new it will be perfect. Not to have been wrong, but to have been at all, is the crime. Existence is sin. Excellence is no longer considered as an experimental thing which is to grow gradually out of observation and practice, and to be improved by the accumulating additions brought by the wisdom of successive ages. *Our wisdom* is not a creature slowly brought by ripening time and gradual growth to perfection; but is an instantaneously created goddess, which starts at once, full grown, mature, armed cap-a-pee, from the heads of our modern thunderers. Or rather, if I may change the allusion, a perfect saystem is *now* expected inevitably to spring spontaneously at once, like the fabled bird of Arabia, from the ashes of its parent; and, like that, can receive its birth no other way but by the destruction of its predecessor.

Instead of clearing away what is redundant, pruning what is cumbersome, supplying what is defective, and amending what is wrong, we adopt the indefinite rage for radical reform of Jack, who, in altering lord Peter's* coat, showed his zeal by crying out, 'Tear away, brother Martin, for the love of heaven; never mind, so you do but tear away.'

This tearing system has unquestionably rent away some valuable parts of that strong, rich native stuff, which formed the ancient texture of British manners. That we have gained much I am persuaded; that we have lost nothing I dare not therefore affirm. But though it fairly exhibits a mark of our improved judgment to ridicule the fantastic notions of love and honour in the heroic ages; let us not rejoice that the spirit of generosity in sentiment, and of ardour in piety, the exuberances of which were then so inconvenient, are now sunk as unreasonably low. That revolution of taste and manners which the unparalleled wit and genius of Don Quixote so happily effected throughout all the polished countries of Europe, by abolishing extravagancies the most absurd and pernicious, was so far imperfect, that some virtues which he never meant to expose, unjustly fell into disrepute with the absurdities which he did: and it is become the turn of the present taste inseparably to attach in no small degree that which is ridiculous to that which is serious and heroic. Some modern works of wit have assisted in bringing piety and some of the noblest virtues into contempt, by studiously associating them with oddity, childish simplicity, and ignorance of the world: and unnecessary pains have been taken to extinguish that zeal and ardour, which however liable to excess and error, are yet the spring of whatever is great and excellent in the human character. The novel of Cervantes is incomparable; the Tartuffe of Moliere is unequalled; but true generosity and true religion will never lose any thing of their intrinsic value, because knight-errantry and hypocrisy are legitimate objects for satire.

But to return from this too long digression, to the subject of female influence. Those who have not watched the united operation of vanity and feeling on a youthful mind, will not conceive how much less formidable the ridicule of all his own sex will be to a very young man, than that of those women to whom he has been taught to look up as the arbiters of elegance. Such a youth, I doubt not, might be able to work him-

* Swift's Tale of a Tub

self up, by the force of genuine Christian principle, to such a pitch of true heroism, as to refuse a challenge (and it requires more real courage to refuse a challenge than to accept one) who would yet be in danger of relapsing into the dreadful pusillanimity of the world, when he is told that no woman of fashion will hereafter look on him but with contempt. While we have cleared away the rubbish of the Gothic ages, it were to be wished we had not retained the most criminal of all their institutions. Why chivalry should indicate a madman, while its leading object, the *single combat*, should designate a gentleman, has not yet been explained. Nay, the plausible original motive is lost, while the sinful practice is continued; for the fighter of the duel no longer *pretends* to be a glorious redresser of the wrongs of strangers; no longer considers himself as piously appealing to heaven for the justice of his cause; but from the slavish fear of unmerited reproach, often selfishly hazards the happiness of his nearest connexions, and always comes forth in direct defiance of an acknowledged command of the Almighty. Perhaps there are few occasions on which female influence might be exerted to a higher purpose than on this, in which laws and conscience have hitherto effected so little. But while the duellist (who perhaps becomes a duellist only because he was first a seducer) is welcomed with smiles; the more hardy dignified youth, who, not because he fears man but God, declines a challenge, who is resolved to brave disgrace rather than commit sin, would be treated with cool contempt by those very persons to whose esteem he might reasonably have looked, as one of the rewards of his true and substantial fortitude.

How then is it to be reconciled with the decisions of principle, that delicate women should receive with complacency the successful libertine, who has been detected by the wretched father or the injured husband in a criminal commerce, the discovery of which has too justly banished the unhappy partner of his crime from virtuous society? Nay, if he happens to be very handsome, or very brave, or very fashionable, is there not sometimes a kind of dishonourable competition for his favour? Is there not a sort of bad popularity attached to his attentions? But, whether his flattering reception be derived from birth, or parts, or person, or (what is often a substitute for all) from his having made his way into *good company*, women of distinction sully the sanctity of virtue by the too visible pleasure they sometimes express at the attentions of such a popular libertine, whose voluble small-talk they admire, whose sprightly nothings they quote, whose vices they justify or extenuate, and whom perhaps their very favour tends to prevent from becoming a better character, because he finds himself more acceptable as he is.

May I be allowed to introduce a new part of my subject, by remarking that it is a matter of inconceivable importance, though not perhaps sufficiently considered, when any popular work, not on a religious topic, but on any common subject, such as politics, history or science, has happened to be written by an author of sound Christian principles? It may not have been necessary; nor prudently practicable, to have a single page in the whole work professedly religious; but still, when the living principle informs the mind of the writer, it is almost impossible but that something of its spirit will diffuse itself even into subjects with which it should seem but remotely connected. It is at least a comfort to the reader, to feel that honest confidence which results from knowing that he has put himself into safe hands; that he has committed himself to an author, whose known principles are a pledge that his reader need not be driven to watch himself at every step with anxious circumspection; that he need not be looking on the right hand and on the left, as if he knew there were pitfalls under the flowers which are delighting him. And it is no small point gained, that on subjects in which you do not look to *improve* your religion, it is at least secured from deterioration. If the Athenian laws were so delicate that they disgraced any one who showed an inquiring traveller the wrong road, what disgrace among Christians, should attach to that author, who when a youth is inquiring the road to history or philosophy, directs him to blasphemy and unbelief!*

In animadverting farther on the reigning evils which the times more particularly demand that women of rank and influence should repress, Christianity calls upon them to bear their decided testimony against every thing which is notoriously contributing to the public corruption. It calls upon them to banish from their dressing rooms (and oh, that their influence could banish from the libraries of their sons and husbands) that sober and unsuspected mass of mischief, which, by assuming the plausible names of science, of philosophy, of arts, of belles lettres, is gradually administering death to the principles of those who would be on their guard, had the poison been labelled with its own pernicious title. Avowed attacks upon revelation are more easily resisted, because the malignity is advertised. But who suspects the destruction which lurks under the harmless or instructive names of *general history*, *natural history*, *travels*, *voyages*, *lives*, *encyclopedias*, *criticism*, and *romance*? Who will deny that many of these works contain much admirable matter; brilliant passages, important facts, just descriptions, faithful pictures of nature, and valuable illustrations of science? But while 'the dead fly lies at the bottom,' the whole will exhale a corrupt and pestilential stench.

* The author has often heard it mentioned as matter of regret, that Mr Gibbon should have blemished his elegant history with the two notoriously offensive chapters against Christianity. But does not this regret seem to imply that the work would, by this omission, have been left safe and unexceptionable? May we not rather consider these chapters as a fatal rock indeed; but as a rock enlightened by a beacon, fairly and unequivocally warning us of the surrounding perils? To change the metaphor—Had not the mischiefs of these chapters been rendered thus conspicuous, the incautious reader would have been still left exposed to the fatal effects of the more disguised poison which is infused through almost all parts of the volumes. Is it not obvious that a spirit so virulent against revealed religion as these two chapters indicate, would be incessantly pouring out some of its infectious matter on every occasion, and would even industriously make the opportunities which it did not find?

Novels, which chiefly used to be dangerous in one respect, are now become mischievous in a thousand. They are continually shifting their ground, and enlarging their sphere, and are daily becoming vehicles of wider mischief. Sometimes they concentrate their force, and are at once employed to diffuse destructive politics, deplorable profligacy, and impudent infidelity. Rousseau was the first popular dispenser of this complicated drug, in which the deleterious infusion was strong, and the effect proportionably fatal. For he does not attempt to seduce the affections but through the medium of the principles. He does not paint an innocent woman ruined, repenting, and restored; but with a far more mischievous refinement, he annihilates the value of chastity, and with pernicious subtlety attempts to make this heroine appear almost more amiable without it. He exhibits a virtuous woman the victim, not of temptation, but of reason; not of vice, but of sentiment; not of passion, but of conviction; and strikes at the very root of honour, by elevating a crime into a principle. With a metaphysical sophistry the most plausible, he debauches the heart of woman, by cherishing her vanity in the erection of a system of male virtues, to which, with a lofty dereliction of those that are her more peculiar and characteristic praise, he tempts her to aspire; powerfully insinuating, that to this splendid system chastity does not necessarily belong: thus corrupting the judgment, and bewildering the understanding, as the most effectual way to inflame the imagination and deprave the heart. The rare mischief of this author, consists in his power of seducing by falsehood those who love truth, but whose minds are still wavering, and whose principles are not yet formed. He allures the warm-hearted to embrace vice, not because they prefer vice, but because he gives to vice so natural an air of virtue: and ardent and enthusiastic youth, too confidently trusting in their integrity and in their teacher, will be undone, while they fancy they are indulging in the noblest feelings of their nature. Many authors will more infallibly complete the ruin of the loose and ill-disposed: but perhaps there never was a net of such exquisite art, and inextricable workmanship, spread to entangle innocence, and ensnare inexperience, as the writings of Rousseau; and, unhappily, the victim does not even struggle in the toils, because part of the delusion consists in his imagining that he is set at liberty.

Some of our recent popular publications have adopted and enlarged all the mischiefs of this school; and the principal evil arising from them is, that the virtues they exhibit are almost more dangerous than the vices. The chief materials out of which these delusive systems are framed, are characters who practice superfluous acts of generosity, while they are trampling on obvious and commanded duties, who combine inflated sentiments of honour with actions the most flagitious; a high tone of self-confidence, with a perpetual neglect of self-denial; pathetic apostrophes to the passions, but no attempt to resist them. They teach that chastity is only individual attachment; that no duty exists which is not prompted by feeling; that impulse is the main-spring of virtuous actions, while laws and religion are only unjust restraints; the former imposed by arbitrary men, the latter by the absurd prejudices of timorous and unenlightened conscience. Alas! they do not know that the best creature of impulse that ever lived, is but a wayward, unfixed, unprincipled being! That the best *natural* man requires a curb; and needs that balance to the affections which Christianity alone can furnish, and without which benevolent propensities are no security to virtue. And perhaps it is not too much to say, in spite of the monopoly of benevolence to which the new philosophy lays claim, that the *human* duties of the second table have never once been well performed by any of the rejectors of that previous portion of the decalogue which enjoins duty to *God.*

In some of the most splendid of these characters compassion is erected into the throne of justice, and justice degraded into the rank of plebian virtues. It is considered as a noble exemplification of sentiment that creditors should be defrauded, while the money due to them is lavished in dazzling acts of charity to some object that affects the senses; which paroxysms of charity are made the sponge of every sin, and the substitute of every virtue: the whole indirectly tending to intimate how very *benevolent people are who are not Christians.* From many of these compositions, indeed, Christianity is systematically, and always virtually, excluded; for the law, and the prophets, and the gospel, *can* make no part of a scheme in which this world is looked upon as all in all; in which want and misery are considered as evils arising solely from the defects of human governments, and not as making part of the dispensations of God; in which poverty is represented as merely a political evil, and the restraints which tend to keep the poor honest, are painted as the most flagrant injustice. The Gospel *can* make no part of a system in which the absurd idea of perfectibility is considered as applicable to fallen creatures; in which the chimerical project of consummate earthly happiness, (founded on the mad pretence of loving the poor better than God loves them) would defeat the divine plan, which meant this world for a scene of discipline, not of remuneration. The Gospel *can* have nothing to do with a system in which sin is reduced to a little human imperfection, and Old Baily crimes are softened down to a few engaging weaknesses; and in which the turpitude of all the vices a man himself commits, is done away by his *candour* in tolerating all the vices committed by others.*

But the part of the system the most fatal to that class whom I am addressing is, that even in those works which do not go all the length of treating marriage as an unjust infringement on liberty, and a tyrannical deduction from general happiness; yet it commonly happens that

* It is to be lamented that some, even of those more virtuous novel writers, who *intend* to espouse the cause of religion, yet exhibit such false views of it. I have lately seen a work of some merit in this way, which was meritoriously designed to expose the impieties of the new philosophy. But the writer betrayed his own imperfect knowledge of the Christianity he was defending, by making his hero, whom he proposed as a pattern, *fight a duel!*

the hero or heroine, who has particularly violated the letter of the seventh commandment, and continues to live in the allowed violation of its spirit, is painted as so amiable, and so benevolent, so tender or so brave; and the temptation is represented as so *irresistible*, (for all these philosophers are fatalists) the predominant and cherished sin is so filtered and defected of its pollutions, and is so sheltered and surrounded, and relieved with shining qualities, that the innocent and impressible young reader is brought to lose all horror of the awful crime in question, in the complacency she feels for the engaging virtues of the criminal.

There is another object to which I would direct the exertion of that power of female influence of which I am speaking. Those ladies who take the lead in society, are loudly called upon to act as the guardians of the public taste, as well as of the public virtue. They are called upon, therefore, to oppose with the whole weight of their influence, the irruption of those swarms of publications now daily issuing from the banks of the Danube, which, like their ravaging predecessors of the darker ages, though with far other and more fatal arms, are overrunning civilized society. Those readers, whose purer taste has been formed on the correct models of the old classic school, see with indignation and astonishment the Huns and Vandals once more overpowering the Greeks and Romans. They behold our minds, with a retrograde but rapid motion, hurried back to the reign of 'chaos and old night,' by distorted and unprincipled compositions, which, in spite of strong flashes of genius, unite the taste of the Goths with the morals of Bagshot.*

Gorgons and Hydras, and Chimeras dire!

These compositions terrify the weak, and amaze and enchant the idle; while they disgust the discerning, by wild and misshapen superstitions, in which, with that *consistency* which forms so striking a feature of the new philosophy, those who most earnestly deny the immortality of the soul are most eager to introduce the machinery of ghosts.

The writings of the French infidels were some years ago circulated in England with uncommon industry, and with some effect: but the plain sense and good principles of the far greater part of our countrymen, resisted the attack, and rose superior to the trial. Of the doctrines and principles here alluded to, the dreadful consequences, not only in the unhappy country where they originated, and were almost universally adopted, but in every part of Europe where they have been received, have been such as to serve as a beacon to surrounding nations, if any warning can preserve them from destruction. In this country the subject is now so well understood, that every thing which issues from the *French* press is received with jealousy; and a work, on the first appearance of its exhibiting the doctrines of Voltaire and his associates, is rejected with indignation.

But let us not on account of this victory repose in confident security. The modern apostles of infidelity and immorality, little less indefatigable in dispersing their pernicious doctrines than the first apostles were in propagating Gospel truths, have indeed changed their weapons, but they have by no means desisted from the attack. To destroy the principles of Christianity in this island, appears at the present moment to be their grand aim. Deprived of the assistance of the French press, they are now attempting to attain their object under the close and more artificial veil of German literature. Conscious that religion and morals will stand or fall together, their attacks are sometimes levelled against the one, and sometimes against the other. With strong occasional professions of general attachment to both of these, they endeavour to interest the feelings of the reader, sometimes in favour of some one particular vice, at other times on the subject of some one objection to revealed religion. Poetry as well as prose, romance as well as history, writings on philosophical as well as on political subjects, have thus been employed to instil the principles of *Illuminism*, while incredible pains have been taken to obtain able translations of every book which was supposed likely to be of use in corrupting the heart or misleading the understanding. In many of these translations, certain bolder passages, which, though well received in Germany, would have excited disgust in England, are wholly omitted, in order that the mind may be more certainly, though more slowly, prepared for the full effect of the same poison to be administered in a stronger degree at another period.

Let not those to whom these pages are addressed deceive themselves, by supposing this to be a fable; and let them inquire most seriously whether I speak truth, in asserting that the attacks of infidelity in Great Britain are at this moment principally directed against the female breast. Conscious of the influence of women in civil society, conscious of the effect which female infidelity produced in France, they attribute the ill success of their attempts in this country to their having been hitherto chiefly addressed to the male sex. They are now sedulously labouring to destroy the religious principles of women, and in too many instances have fatally succeeded. For this purpose, not only novels and romances have been made the vehicles of vice and infidelity, but the same allurement has been held out to the women of our country, which was employed by the first philosophists to the first sinner—Knowledge. Listen to the precepts of the new German enlighteners, and you need no longer remain in that situation in which Providence has placed you! Follow their example, and you shall be permitted to indulge in all those gratifications which custom, and not religion has tolerated in the male sex.

Let us jealously watch every deepening shade in the change of manners; let us mark every step, however inconsiderable, whose tendency is downwards. Corruption is neither stationary nor retrograde; and to have departed from modesty, simplicity, and truth, is already to have made a progress. It is not only awfully true,

* The newspapers announce that Schiller's tragedy of the Robbers, which inflamed the young nobility of Germany to enlist themselves into a band of highwaymen to rob in the forests of Bohemia, is now acting in England by persons of quality!

that since the new principles have been afloat, *women* have been too eagerly inquisitive after these monstrous compositions; but it is true also, that with a new and offensive renunciation of their native delicacy, *many women of character* make little hesitation in avowing their familiarity with works abounding with principles, sentiments, and descriptions, 'which should not be so much as named among them. By allowing their minds to come in contact with such contagious matter, they are irrecoverably tainting them; and by acknowledging that they are actually conversant with such corruptions (with whatever reprobation of the author they may qualify their perusal of the book) they are exciting in others a most mischievous curiosity for the same unhallowed gratification. Thus they are daily diminishing in the young and timid those wholesome scruples, by which, when a tender conscience ceases to be intrenched, all the subsequent stages of ruin are gradually facilitated.

We have hitherto spoken only of the German *writings;* but because there are multitudes who seldom read, equal pains have been taken to promote the same object through the medium of the stage: and this weapon is, of all others, that against which it is, at the present moment, the most important to warn the more inconsiderate of my countrywomen.

As a specimen of the German drama, it may not be unseasonable to offer a few remarks on the admired play of the *Stranger.* In this piece the character of an *adultress,* which, in all periods of the world, ancient as well as modern, in all countries, heathen as well as christian, has hitherto been held in detestation, and has never been introduced but to be reprobated, is for the first time presented to our view in the most pleasing and fascinating colours. The heroine is a woman who forsook a husband the most affectionate and the most amiable, and lived for some time in a criminal commerce with her seducer. Repenting at length of her crime, she buries herself in retirement.—The talents of the poet during the whole piece are exerted in attempting to render this woman the object not only of the compassion and forgiveness, but of the esteem and affection of the audience. The injured husband, convinced of his wife's repentance, forms a resolution which every man of true feeling and christian piety will probably approve. He forgives her offence, and promises her through life, his advice, protection and fortune, together with every thing which can alleviate the misery of her condition, but refuses to replace her in the situation of his wife! But this is not sufficient for the *German* author. His efforts are employed, and it is to be feared but too successfully, in making the audience consider the husband as an unrelenting savage, while they are led by the art of the poet anxiously to wish to see an adultress restored to that rank of women who have not violated the most solemn covenant that can be made with man, nor disobeyed one of the most positive laws which has been enjoined by God.

About the same time that this first attempt at representing an adultress in an exemplary light was made by a German dramatist, which forms an æra in manners, a direct vindication of adultery was for the first time attempted by a *woman,* a professed admirer and imitator of the German suicide Werter. *The female Werter,* as she is styled by her biographer, asserts in a work entitled, 'The Wrongs of Women,' that adultery is justifiable, and that the restrictions placed on it by the laws of England, constitute one of the *Wrongs of Women.*

This leads me to dwell a little longer on this most destructive class in the whole wide range of modern corrupters, who effect the most desperate work of the passions without so much as pretending to urge their violence, in extenuation of the guilt of indulging them. They solicit this very indulgence with a sort of cold blooded speculation, and invite the reader to the most unbounded gratifications, with all the saturnine coolness of a geometrical calculation. Theirs is an iniquity rather of phlegm than of spirit: and in the pestilent atmosphere they raise about them, as in the infernal climate described by Milton—

> The parching air*
> Burns frore, and frost performs th' effects of fire.

This cool, calculating, intellectual wickedness eats out the very heart and core of virtue, and like a deadly mildew blights and shrivels the blooming promise of the human spring. Its benumbing touch communicates a torpid sluggishness which paralyses the soul. It descants on depravity as gravely, and details its grossest acts as frigidly as if its object were to *allay* the tumult of the passions, while it is letting them loose on mankind, by 'plucking off the muzzle of present restraint and future accountableness.' The system is a dire infusion, compounded of bold impiety, brutish sensuality, and exquisite folly, which creeping fatally about the heart, checks the moral circulation, and totally stops the pulse of goodness by the extinction of the vital principle: thus not only choking the stream of actual virtue, but drying up the very fountain of future remorse and remote repentance.

The ravages which some of the old offenders against purity made in the youthful heart, by the exercise of fervid but licentious imagination on the passions, resembled the mischief effected by floods, cataracts, and volcanos. The desolation indeed was terrible, and the ruin was tremendous; yet it was a train which did not *infallibly* preclude the possibility of recovery. The country, though deluged, and devastated, was not utterly put beyond the power of restoration. The harvests indeed were destroyed, and all was wide sterility. But though the crops were lost, the *seeds* of vegetation were not absolutely eradicated; so that, after a long and barren blank, fertility *might* finally return.

But the heart once infected with this newly medicated venom, subtile though sluggish in its operation, resembles what travellers relate of that blasted spot the dead sea, where those devoted cities once stood, which for their pollutions were burnt with fire from heaven. It continues a stagnant lake of putrifying waters. No whole-

* 'When the north wind bloweth it devoureth the mountains, and burneth the wilderness, and consumeth the grass as fire!' Eccles. xl 20

some blade ever more shoots up; the air is so tainted that no living thing subsists within its influence. Near the sulphureous pool the very principle of being is annihilated. All is death,

Death, unrepealable, eternal death!

But let us take comfort, These projects are not yet generally realized. These atrocious principles are not yet adopted into common practice. Though corruption seems with a confluent tide to be pouring in upon us from every quarter, yet there is still left among us a discriminating judgment. Clear and strongly marked distinctions between right and wrong still subsist. While we continue to cherish this sanity of mind, the case is not desperate. Though that crime, the growth of which always exhibits the most irrefragable proof of the dissoluteness of public manners; though that crime, which cuts up order and virtue by the roots, and violates the sanctity of vows, is awfully increasing,

> 'Till senates seem,
> For purposes of empire less conven'd
> Than to release the adult'ress from her bonds:

yet, thanks to the surviving efficacy of a holy religion, to the operation of virtuous laws, and to the energy and unshaken integrity with which these laws are *now* administered; and, most of all, perhaps, to a standard of morals which continues in force, when the principles which sanctioned it are no more; this crime, in the female sex at least, is still held in just abhorrence. If it be practised, it is not honourable; if it be committed, it is not justified; we do not yet affect to palliate its turpitude; as yet it hides its abhorred head in lurking privacy; and reprobation *hitherto* follows its publicity.

But on your exerting your influence, with just application and increasing energy, may in no small degree, depend whether this corruption shall still continue to be resisted. For the abhorrence of a practice will too probably diminish, of which the theory is perused with enthusiasm. From admiring to adopting, the step is short, and the progress rapid; and it is in the moral as in the natural world; the motion, in the case of minds as well as of bodies, is accelerated as they approach the centre to which they are tending.

O ye to whom this address is particularly directed! an awful charge is, in this instance, committed to your hands; as you discharge it or shrink from it, you promote or injure the honour of your daughters and the happiness of your sons, of both of which you are the depositories. And, while you resolutely persevere in making a stand against the encroachments of this crime, suffer not your firmness to be shaken by that affectation of charity, which is growing into a general substitute for principle. Abuse not so noble a quality as Christian candour, by misemploying it in instances to which it does not apply. Pity the wretched woman you dare not countenance; and bless Him who has 'made you to differ.' If unhappily she be your relation or friend, anxiously watch for the period when she shall be deserted by her betrayer; and see if, by your Christian offices, she can be snatched from a perpetuity of vice. But if, through the Divine blessing on your patient endeavours, she should ever be awakened to remorse, be not anxious to restore the forlorn penitent to that society against whose laws she has so grievously offended; and remember that her soliciting such a restoration, furnishes but too plain a proof that she is not the penitent your partiality would believe; since penitence is more anxious to make its peace with heaven than with the world. Joyfully would a truly contrite spirit commute an earthly for an everlasting reprobation! To restore a criminal to public society, is perhaps to tempt her to repeat her crime, or to deaden her repentance for having committed it, as well as to insult and to injure that society; while to restore a strayed soul to God will add lustre to your Christian character, and brighten your eternal crown.

In the mean time, there are other evils, ultimately perhaps tending to this, into which we are falling, through that sort of fashionable candour, which, as was hinted above, is among the mischievous characteristics of the present day; of which period perhaps it is not the smallest evil, that vices are made to look so like virtues and are so assimilated to them, that it requires watchfulness and judgment sufficient to analyze and discriminate. There are certain women of good fashion who practice irregularities not consistent with the strictness of virtue; while their good sense and knowledge of the world make them at the same time keenly alive to the value of reputation. They want to retain their indulgences, without quite forfeiting their credit; but finding their fame fast declining, they cling, by flattery and marked attentions, to a few persons of more than ordinary character; and thus, till they are driven to let go their hold, continue to prop a falling fame.

On the other hand, there are not wanting women of distinction of very correct general conduct, and of no ordinary sense and virtue, who confiding with a high mind on what they too confidently call *the integrity of their own hearts*, anxious to deserve a good fame on the one hand, by a life free from reproach, yet secretly too desirous on the other of securing a worldly and fashionable reputation; while their general associates are persons of honour, and their general resort places of safety; yet allow themselves to be occasionally present at the midnight orgies of revelry and gaming, in houses of no honourable estimation; and thus help to keep up characters, which without their sustaining hand, would sink to their just level of contempt and reprobation. While they are holding out this plank to a drowning reputation, rather, it is to be feared, showing their own strength than assisting another's weakness, they value themselves, perhaps, on not partaking of the worse parts of the amusements which may be carrying on; but they sanction them by their presence; they lend their countenance to corruptions they should abhor, and their example to the young and inexperienced, who are looking about for some such sanction to justify them in that to which they were before inclined, but were too timid to have ventured upon without the protection of such unsullied names. Thus these respectable characters, without looking to

the general consequences of their indiscretion, are thoughtlessly employed in breaking down, as it were, the broad fence which should ever separate two very different sorts of society, and are becoming a kind of unnatural link between vice and virtue.

There is a gross deception which even persons of reputation practise on themselves. They loudly condemn vice and irregularity as an abstract principle, nay, they stigmatise them in persons of an opposite party, or in those from whom they themselves have no prospect of personal advantage or amusement, and in whom therefore they have no particular interest to tolerate evil. But the same disorders are viewed without abhorrence when practised by those who in any way minister to *their* pleasures. Refined entertainments, luxurious decorations, select music; whatever furnishes any delight rare and exquisite to the sense, these soften the severity of criticism; these palliate sins; these varnish over the flaws of a broken character, and extort not pardon merely but justification, countenance, intimacy! The more respectable will not, perhaps, go all the length of vindicating the disreputable vice, but they affect to disbelieve its existence in the individual instance; or, failing in this, they will bury its acknowledged turpitude in the seducing qualities of the agreeable delinquent. Talents of every kind are considered as a commutation for a few vices; and such talents are made a passport to introduce into honourable society, characters whom their profligacy ought to exclude from it.

But the great object to which YOU, who are or may be mothers, are more especially called, is the education of your children. If we are responsible for the use of influence in the case of those over whom we have no immediate control, in the case of our children we are responsible for the exercise of acknowledged *power*; a power wide in its extent, indefinite in its effects, and inestimable in its importance. On YOU depend in no small degree the principles of the whole rising generation. To your direction the daughters are almost exclusively committed; and until a certain age, to you also is consigned the mighty privilege of forming the hearts and minds of your infant sons. To YOU is made over the awfully important trust of infusing the first principles of piety into the tender minds of those who may be one day called to instruct, not families merely, but districts; to influence, not individuals, but senates. Your private exertions may at this moment be contributing to the future happiness, your domestic neglect, to the future ruin of your country. And may you never forget, in this your early instruction of your offspring, nor they, in their future application of it, that religion is the only sure ground of morals; that private principle is the only solid basis of public virtue. O think that they both may be fixed or forfeited for ever according to the use you are now making of that power which God has delegated to you, and of which he will demand a strict account. By his blessing on your pious labours may both sons and daughters hereafter 'arise and call you blessed.' And in the great day of general account, may every Christian mother be enabled through divine grace to say, with humble confidence, to her Maker and Redeemer, 'Behold the children whom thou hast given me!'

Christianity, driven out from the rest of the world, has still, blessed be God! a 'strong hold' in this country. And though it be the special duty of the appointed 'watchman *now* that he seeth the sword come upon the land, to blow the trumpet and warn the people, which if he neglect to do, their blood shall be required of the watchman's hand:'* yet, in this sacred garrison, *impregnable but by neglect*, YOU too have an awful post, that of arming the minds of the rising race with the 'shield of faith, whereby they shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked;' 'that of girding them with that sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.' Let that very period which is desecrated in a neighbouring country, by a formal renunciation of religion, be solemnly marked by YOU to purposes diametrically opposite. Let that dishonoured æra in which *they* avowed their resolution to exclude Christianity from the national education, be the precise moment seized upon by YOU for its more sedulous inculcation. And while *their* children are systematically trained to live without God in the world,' let YOURS, with a more decided emphasis, be consecrated to promote his glory in it.

If you neglect this your bounden duty, you will have effectually contributed to expel Christianity from her last citadel. And remember, that the dignity of the work to which you are called, is no less than that of 'preserving the ark of the Lord.'

CHAP. II.

On the education of women.—The prevailing system tends to establish the errors which it ought to correct.—Dangers arising from an excessive cultivation of the arts.

IT is far from being the object of this slight work to offer a regular plan of female education, a task which has been often more properly assumed by far abler writers; but it is intended rather to suggest a few remarks on the reigning mode, which though it has had many panegyrists, appears to be defective, not only in certain particulars, but as a general system. There are indeed numberless honourable exceptions to an observation which will be thought severe; yet the author would ask, whether it be not the natural tendency of the prevailing and popular mode to excite and promote those very evils which it ought to be the main end and objects of christian instruction to remove? whether the reigning system does not tend to weaken the principles it ought to strengthen, and to dissolve the heart it should fortify? whether, instead of directing the grand and important engine of education to attack and destroy *vanity, selfishness, and inconsideration*, that triple alliance in strict and constant league against female virtue; the combined powers of instruction are not sedulously confederated in confirming their strength and establishing their empire?

* Ezekiel, xxxiii. 6.

If indeed the *material* substance; if the body and limbs, with the organs and senses, be really the more valuable objects of attention, then there is little room for animadversion and improvement: but if the immaterial and immortal mind; if the heart, 'out of which are the issues of life,' be the main concern; if the great business of education be to implant right ideas, to communicate useful knowledge, to form a taste and a sound judgment, to resist evil propensities, and above all to seize the favourable season for infusing principles and confirming habits; if education be a school to fit us for life, and life be a school to fit us for eternity; if such, I repeat it, be the chief work and grand ends of education, it may then be worth enquiring how far these ends are likely to be effected by the prevailing system.

Is it not a fundamental error to consider children as innocent beings, whose little weaknesses may perhaps want some correction, rather than as beings who bring into the world a corrupt nature and evil dispositions, which it should be the great end of education to rectify? This appears to be such a foundation-truth, that if I were asked what quality is most important in an instructor of youth, I should not hesitate to reply, *such a strong impression of the corruption of our nature, as should insure a disposition to counteract it; together with such a deep view and thorough knowledge of the human heart, as should be necessary for developing and controlling its most secret and complicated workings.* And let us remember that to *know the world*, as it is called, that is to know its local manners, temporary usages and evanescent fashions, is not to *know human nature*: and that where this prime knowledge is wanting, those natural evils which ought to be counteracted will be fostered.

Vanity, for instance, is reckoned among the light and venial errors of youth; nay, so far from being treated as a dangerous enemy, it is often called in as an auxiliary. At worst, it is considered as a harmless weakness, which subtracts little from the value of a character; as a natural effervescence, which will subside of itself, when the first ferment of the youthful passions shall have done working. But those persons know little of the conformation of the human, and especially of the female heart, who fancy that vanity is ever exhausted, by the mere operation of time and events. Let those who maintain this opinion look into our places of public resort, and there behold if the ghost of departed beauty is not to its last flitting, fond of haunting the scenes of its past pleasures. The soul, unwilling (if I may borrow an allusion from the Platonic mythology) to quit the spot in which the body enjoyed its former delights, still continues to hover about the same place, though the same pleasures are no longer to be found there. Disappointments indeed may divert vanity into a new direction; prudence may prevent it from breaking out into excesses, and age may prove that it is 'vexation of spirit;' but neither disappointment, prudence, nor age can *cure* it: for they do not correct the principle. Nay, the very disappointment itself serves as a painful evidence of its protracted existence.

Since then there is a season when the youthful must cease to be young, and the beautiful to excite admiration, to learn how to grow old gracefully is perhaps one of the rarest and most valuable arts which can be taught to woman. And it must be confessed it is a most severe trial for those women to be called to lay down beauty, who have nothing else to take up. It is for this sober season of life that education should lay up its rich resources. However disregarded they may hitherto have been, they will be wanted now. When admirers fall away, and flatterers become mute, the mind will be driven to retire into itself, and if it find no entertainment at home, it will be driven back again upon the world with increased force. Yet forgetting this, do we not seem to educate our daughters exclusively for the transient period of youth, when it is to maturer life we ought to advert? Do we not educate them for a crowd, forgetting that they are to live at home? for the world, and not for themselves? for show, and not for use? for time, and not for eternity?

Vanity (and the same may be said of selfishness) is not to be resisted like any other vice, which is sometimes busy and sometimes quiet; it is not to be attacked as a single fault which is indulged in opposition to a single virtue; but it is uniformly to be controlled, as an active, a restless, a growing principle, at constant war with all the christian graces; which not only mixes itself into all our faults, but insinuates into all our virtues too; and will, if not checked effectually, rob our best actions of their rewards. Vanity, if I may use the analogy, is with respect to the other vices, what feeling is in regard to the other senses; it is not confined in its operation to the eye, or the ear, or any single organ, but is diffused through the whole being, alive in every part, awakened and communicated by the slightest touch.

Not a few of the evils of the present day arise from a new and perverted application of terms among these, perhaps, there is not one more absurd, misunderstood, or misapplied, than the term *accomplishments*. This word in its original meaning signifies *completeness, perfection*. But I may safely appeal to the observation of mankind, whether they do not meet with swarms of youthful females, issuing from our boarding schools, as well as emerging from the more private scenes of domestic education, who are introduced into the world, under the broad and universal title of *accomplished young ladies*, of *all* of whom it cannot very truly and correctly be pronounced, that they illustrate the definition, by a completeness which leaves nothing to be added, and a perfection which leaves nothing to be desired.

This frenzy of accomplishments, unhappily, is no longer restricted within the usual limits of rank and fortune; the middle orders have caught the contagion, and it rages downward with increasing and destructive violence, from the elegantly dressed but slenderly portioned curate's daghter to the equally fashioned daughter of the little tradesman, and of the more opulent but not more judicious farmer. And is it not obvious, that as far as this epidemical mania has spread, this very valuable part of society is declining in usefulness, as it rises in

its ill-founded pretensions to elegance? till this rapid revolution of the manners of the middle class has so far altered the character of the age, as to be in danger of rendering obsolete the heretofore common saying, 'that most worth and virtue are to be found in the middle station.' For I do not scruple to assert, that in general, as far as my little observation has extended, this class of females, in what relates both to religious knowledge and to practical industry, falls short both of the very high and the very low. Their new course of education, and the indolent habits of life and elegance of dress connected with it, peculiarly unfits them for the active duties of their own very important condition; while, with frivolous eagerness, and second-hand opportunities, they run to snatch a few of those showy acquirements which decorate the great. This is done apparently with one or other of these views; either to make their fortunes by marriage, or if that fail, to qualify them to become teachers of others: hence the abundant multiplication of superficial wives, and of incompetent and illiterate governesses. The use of the pencil, the performance of exquisite but unnecessary works, the study of foreign languages and of music, require (with some exceptions which should always be made in favour of great natural genius) a degree of leisure which belongs exclusively to affluence.* One use of learning languages is, not that we may know what the terms which express the articles of our dress and our table are called in French or Italian; nor that we may think over a few ordinary phrases in English, and then translate them, without one foreign idiom; for he who cannot *think* in a language cannot be said to understand it: but the great use of acquiring any foreign language is, either that it enables us occasionally to converse with foreigners, unacquainted with any other, or that it is a key to the literature of the country to which it belongs. Now those humbler females, the chief part of whose time is required for domestic offices, are little likely to fall in the way of foreigners; and so far from enjoying opportunities for the acquisition of foreign literature, they have seldom time to possess themselves of much of the valuable knowledge which the books of their own country so abundantly furnish; and the acquisition of which would be so much more useful and honourable than the paltry accessions they make by hammering out the meaning of a few passages in a tongue they but imperfectly understand, and of which they are never likely to make any use.

It would be well if the reflection, how eagerly this redundancy of accomplishments is seized on by their inferiors, were to operate as in the case of other absurd fashions; the rich and great being seldom brought to renounce any mode of custom, from the mere consideration that it is preposterous, or that it is wrong; while they are frightened into its immediate relinquishment, from the pressing consideration that the *vulgar* are beginning to adopt it.

* Those among the class in question, whose own good sense leads them to avoid these mistaken pursuits, cannot be offended at a reproof which does not belong to them.

But to return to that more elevated, and on account of their more extended influence only, that more important class of females, to whose use this little book is more immediately dedicated. Some popular authors, on the subject of female instruction, had for a time established a fantastic code of artificial manners. They had refined elegance into insipidity, frittered down delicacy into frivolousness, and reduced manner into *minauderie*. 'But to lisp, and to amble, and to nick-name God's creatures,' has nothing to do with true gentleness of mind; and to be silly makes no necessary part of softness. Another class of contemporary authors turned all the force of their talents to excite *emotions*, to inspire *sentiment*, and to reduce all mental and moral excellence into *sympathy* and *feeling*. These softer qualities were elevated at the expense of principle; and young women were incessantly hearing unqualified sensibility extolled as the perfection of their nature; till those who really possessed this amiable quality, instead of directing, and chastising, and restraining it, were in danger of fostering it to their hurt, and began to consider themselves as deriving their excellence from its excess; while those less interesting damsels, who happened not to find any of this amiable sensibility in their *hearts*, but thought it creditable to have it somewhere, fancied its seat was in the *nerves;* and here indeed it was easily found or feigned; till a false and excessive display of feeling became so predominant, as to bring in question the actual existence of that true tenderness, without which, though a woman may be worthy, she can never be amiable.

Fashion then, by one of her sudden and rapid turns, instantaneously struck out both real sensibility and the affectation of it from the standing list of female perfections; and, by a quick touch of her magic wand, shifted the scene, and at once produced the bold and independent beauty, the intrepid female, the hoyden, the huntress, and the archer; the swinging arms, the confident address, the regimental, and the four-in-hand. Such self-complacent heroines made us ready to regret their softer predecessors, who had aimed only at *pleasing* the other sex, while these aspiring fair ones struggled for the bolder renown of *rivalling* them: the project failed; for, whereas the former had sued for admiration, the latter challenged, seized, compelled it; but the men, as was natural, continued to prefer the more modest claimant to the sturdy competitor.

It would be well if we, who have the advantage of contemplating the errors of the two extremes, were to seek for truth where she is commonly to be found, in the plain and obvious middle path, equally remote from each excess; and while we bear in mind that helplessness is not delicacy, let us also remember that masculine manners do not necessarily include strength of character, nor vigour of intellect. Should we not reflect also, that we are neither to train up Amazons nor Circassians, but that it is our business to form Christians? that we have to educate not only rational, but accountable beings? and, remembering this, should we not be solicitous to let our daughters learn of the well-taught, and associate with the well-bred? In

training them, should we not carefully cultivate intellect, implant religion, and cherish modesty? Then, whatever is engaging in manners would be the natural result of whatever is just in sentiment, and correct in principle; softness would grow out of humility, and external delicacy would spring from purity of heart. Then the decorums, the proprieties, the elegances, and even the graces, as far as they are simple, pure, and honest, would follow as an almost inevitable consequence; for to follow in the train of the christian virtues, and not to take the lead of them, is the proper place which religion assigns to the graces.

Whether we have made the best use of the errors of our predecessors, and of our own numberless advantages, and whether the prevailing system be really consistent with sound policy, true taste, or Christian principle, it may be worth our while to inquire.

Would not a stranger be led to imagine by a view of the reigning mode of female education, that human life consisted of one universal holiday, and that the grand contest between the several competitors was, who should be most eminently qualified to excel, and carry off the prize, in the various shows and games which were intended to be exhibited in it? And to the exhibitors themselves, would he not be ready to apply sir Francis Bacon's observations on the Olympian victors, that they were so excellent in these unnecessary things, that their perfection must needs have been acquired by the neglect of whatever was necessary?

What would the polished Addison who thought that one great end of a lady's learning to dance was, that she might know how to sit still gracefully; what would even the pagan historian* of the great Roman conspirator, who could commemorate it among the defects of this hero's *accomplished* mistress, 'that she was too good a singer and dancer for a virtuous woman;'—what would these refined critics have said, had they lived as we have done, to see the art of dancing lifted into such importance that it cannot with any degree of safety be confided to one instructor; but a whole train of successive masters are considered as absolutely essential to its perfection? What would these accurate judges of female manners have said, to see a modest young lady first delivered into the hands of a military sergeant to instruct her in the *feminine* art of marching? and when this delicate acquisition is attained, to see her transferred to a professor, who is to teach her the Scotch steps; which professor, having communicated his indispensable portion of this indispensable art, makes way for the professor of French dances: and all, perhaps, in their turn, either yield to, or have the honour to co-operate with, a finishing master; each probably receiving a stipend which would make the pious curate or the learned chaplain rich and happy?

The science of music, which used to be communicated in so competent a degree to a young lady by one able instructor, is now distributed among a whole band. She now requires, not a master, but an orchestra. And my country readers would accuse me of exaggeration, were I to hazard enumerating the variety of musical teachers who attend at the same time in the same family; the daughters of which are summoned by at least as many instruments as the subjects of Nebuchadnezzar, to worship the idol which fashion has set up. They would be incredulous were I to produce real instances, in which the delighted mother has been heard to declare, that the visits of masters of every art, and the different masters for various gradations of the same art, followed each other in such close and rapid succession during the whole London residence, that her girls had not a moment's interval to look into a book; nor could she contrive any method to introduce one, till she happily devised the scheme of reading to them herself for half an hour while they were drawing, by which means no time was lost.*

Before the evil has past redress, it will be prudent to reflect that in all polished countries an entire devotedness to the fine arts has been one grand source of the corruption of the women; and so justly were these pernicious consequences appreciated by the Greeks, among whom these arts were carried to the highest possible perfection, that they seldom allowed them to be cultivated to a very exquisite degree by women of great purity of character. And if the ambition of an elegant British lady should be fired by the idea that the accomplished females of those polished states were the admired companions of the philosophers, the poets, the wits, and the artists of Athens; and their beauty or talents, so much the favourite subjects of the muse, the lyre, the pencil, and the chissel, that their pictures and statues furnished the most consummate models of Grecian art: if, I say, the accomplished females of our day are panting for similar renown, let their modesty chastise their ambition, by recollecting that these celebrated women are not to be found among the chaste wives and the virtuous daughters of the Aristideses, the Agises, and the Phocions; but that they are to be looked for among the Phrynes, the Laises, the Aspasias, and the Glyceras. I am persuaded the truly Christian female, whatever be her taste or talents, will renounce the desire of any celebrity when attached to impurity of character, with the same noble indignation with which the virtuous biographer of the above-named heroes renounced any kind of fame which might be dishonestly attained, by exclaiming, 'I had rather it should be said there never was a Plutarch, than that they should say Plutarch was malignant, unjust, or envious.'†

* Sallust.

* Since the first edition of this work appeared the author has received from a person of great eminence the following statement, ascertaining the *time* employed in the acquisition of music, in one instance. As a *general* calculation, it will perhaps be found to be so far from exaggerated, as to be below the truth. The statement concludes with remarking, that the individual who is the subject of it is now married to a man who *dislikes music!*

Suppose your pupil to begin at six years of age, and to continue at the average of four hours a-day *only*, Sunday excepted, and thirteen days allowed for travelling annually, till she is eighteen, the statement stands thus; 300 days multiplied by four, the number of hours amount to 1200; that number multiplied by twelve, which is the number of years, amounts to 14,400 hours!

† No censure is levelled at the exertions of real genius, which is as valuable as it is rare; but at the absurdity of that system which is erecting *the whole* sex into artists.

And while this corruption brought on by an excessive cultivation of the arts, has contributed its full share to the decline of states, it has always furnished an infallible symptom of their impending fall. The satires of the most penetrating and judicious of the Roman poets, corroborating the testimonies of the most accurate of their historians, abound with invectives against the general depravity of manners introduced by the corrupt habits of female education. The bitterness and gross indelicacy of some of these satirists (too gross to be either quoted or referred to) make little against their authority in these points; for how shocking must those corruptions have been, and how obviously offensive their causes, which could have appeared so highly disgusting to minds so coarse as not likely to be scandalized by slight deviations from decency! The famous ode of Horace, attributing the vices and disasters of his degenerate country to the same cause, might, were it quite free from the above objections, be produced, I will not presume to say as an exact picture of the existing manners of this country; but may I not venture to say, as a prophecy, the fulfilment of which cannot be very remote? It may however be observed, that the modesty of the Roman matron, and the chaste demeanour of her virgin daughters, which amidst the stern virtues of the state were as immaculate and pure as the honour of the Roman citizen, fell a sacrifice to the luxurious dissipation brought in by their Asiatic conquests; after which the females were soon taught a complete change of character. They were instructed to accommodate their talents of pleasing to the more vitiated tastes of the other sex; and began to study every grace and every art, which might captivate the exhausted hearts and excite the wearied and capricious inclinations of the men; till by a rapid and at length complete enervation, the Roman character lost its signature, and through a quick succession of slavery, effeminacy, and vice, sunk into that degeneracy of which some of the modern Italian states serve to furnish a too just specimen.

It is of the essence of human things that the same objects which are highly useful in their season, measure, and degree, become mischievous in their excess, at other periods and under other circumstances. In a state of barbarism, the arts are among the best reformers; and they go on to be improved themselves, and improving those who cultivate them, till having reached a certain point, those very arts which were the instruments of civilization and refinement, become instruments of corruption and decay; enervating and depraving in the second instance, by the excess and universality of their cultivation, as certainly as they refined in the first. They become agents of voluptuousness.—They excite the imagination; and the imagination thus excited, and no longer under the government of strict principle, becomes the most dangerous stimulant of the passions; promotes a too keen relish for pleasure, teaching how to multiply its sources, and inventing new and pernicious modes of artificial gratification.

May we not rank among the present corrupt consequences of this unbounded cultivation, the unchaste *costume*, the impure style of dress, and that indelicate statue-like exhibition of the female figure, which by its artfully disposed folds, its seemingly wet and adhesive drapery, so defines the form as to prevent covering itself from becoming a veil? This licentious mode, as the acute Montesquieu observed on the dances of the Spartan virgins, has taught us 'to strip chastity itself of modesty.'

May the author be allowed to address to our own country and our own circumstances, to both of which they seem peculiarly applicable, the spirit of that beautiful apostrophe of the most polished poet of antiquity to the most victorious nation? 'Let us leave to the inhabitants of *conquered countries* the praise of carrying to the very highest degree of perfection, sculpture and the sister arts; but let *this* country direct her own exertions to the art of governing mankind in equity and peace, of showing mercy to the submissive, and of abasing the proud among surrounding nations.'*

CHAP. III.

External improvement. Children's balls. French governesses.

Let me not however be misunderstood.—The customs which fashion has established, when they are not in opposition to what is right, when they are not hostile to virtue, should unquestionably be pursued in the education of ladies. Piety maintains no natural war with elegance, and Christianity would be no gainer by making her disciples unamiable. Religion does not forbid that the exterior be made to a certain degree the object of attention. But the admiration bestowed, the sums expended, and the time lavished on arts, which add little to the intrinsic value of life, should have limitations. While these arts should be admired, let them not be admired above their just value: while they are practised, let it not be to the exclusion of higher employments: while they are cultivated, let it be to amuse leisure, not to engross life.

But it happens unfortunately, that to ordinary observers, the girl who is really receiving the worst instruction often makes the best figure; while in the more correct but less ostensible education, the deep and sure foundations to which the edifice will owe its strength and stability lie out of sight. The outward accomplishments have the dangerous advantage of addressing themselves more immediately to the senses, and

* Let me not be suspected of bringing into any sort of comparison the gentleness of British government with the rapacity of Roman conquests, or the tyrannical principles of Roman dominion. To spoil, to butcher, and to commit every kind of violence, they call, says one of the ablest of their historians, by the lying name of *government*, and when they have spread a general desolation, they call it *peace* (1)

With such dictatorial, or as we might now read, *directorial*, inquisitors, we can have no point of contact; and if I have applied the servile flattery of a delightful poet to the purpose of English happiness, it was only to show wherein true national grandeur consists, and that every country pays too dear a price for those arts and embellishments of society which endanger the loss of its morals and manners.

(1) Tacitus' Life of Agricola, speech of Galgaous to his soldiers.

of course meet every where with those who can in some measure appreciate as well as admire them; for all can see and hear, but all cannot scrutinize and discriminate, External acquirements too recommend themselves the more because they are more rapidly, as well as more visibly progressive; while the mind is led on to improvement by slow motions and imperceptible degrees; while the heart must now be admonished by reproof, and now allured by kindness; its liveliest advances being suddenly impeded by obstinacy, and its brightest prospects often obscured by passion; it is slow in its acquisitions of virtue, and reluctant in its approaches to piety; and its progress, when any progress is made, does not obtrude itself to vulgar observation.—The unruly and turbulent propensities of the mind are not so obedient to the forming hand as defects of manner or awkwardness of gait. Often when we fancy that a troublesome passion is completely crushed, we have the mortification to find that we have 'scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it.' One evil temper starts up before another is conquered. The subduing hand cannot cut off the ever-sprouting heads so fast as the prolific hydra can reproduce them, nor fell the stubborn Antæus so often as he can recruit his strength, and rise in vigorous and repeated opposition.

Hired teachers are also under a disadvantage resembling tenants at rack-rent; it is their interest to bring in an immediate revenue of praise and profit; and, for the sake of a present rich crop, those who are not strictly conscientious, do not care how much the ground is impoverished for future produce. But parents, who are the lords of the soil, must look to permanent value, and to continued fruitfulness. The best effects of a careful education are often very remote; they are to be discovered in future scenes, and exhibited in as yet untried connexions. Every event of life will be putting the heart into fresh situations, and making new demands on its prudence, its firmness, its integrity, or its forbearance. Those whose business it is to form and model it, cannot foresee those contingent situations specifically and distinctly: yet, as far as human wisdom will allow, they must enable it to prepare for them all by general principles, correct habits, and an unremitted sense of dependence on the Great Disposer of events. As the soldier must learn and practise all his evolutions, though he do not know on what service his leader may command him, by what particular foe he shall be most assailed, nor what mode of attack the enemy may employ; so must the young Christian militant be prepared by previous discipline for actual duty.

But the contrary of all this is the case with external acquisitions. The master, it is his interest, will industriously instruct his young pupil to set all her improvements in the most immediate and conspicuous point of view. To attract admiration is the great principle sedulously inculcated into her young heart; and is considered as the fundamental maxim: and, perhaps, if we were required to condense the reigning system of the brilliant education of a lady into an aphorism, it might be comprised into this short sentence, *To allure and to shine.* This system however is the fruitful germ, from which a thousand yet unborn vanities, with all their multiplied ramifications, will spring. A tender mother cannot but feel an honest triumph in contemplating those talents in her daughter, which will necessarily excite admiration; but she will also shudder at the vanity that admiration may excite, and at the new ideas it will awaken: and, startling as it may sound, the labours of a wise mother, anxious for her daughter's best interests, will seem to be at variance with those of all her teachers. She will indeed rejoice at her progress, but she will rejoice with trembling; for she is fully aware that if all possible accomplishments could be bought at the price of a single virtue, of a single principle, the purchase would be infinitely dear, and she would reject the dazzling but destructive acquisition. She knows that the superstructure of the accomplishments can be alone safely erected on the broad and solid basis of Christian humility: nay more, that as the materials of which that superstructure is to be composed, are in themselves of so unstable and tottering a nature, the foundation must be deepened and enlarged with more abundant care, otherwise the fabric will be overloaded with its own ornaments, and what was intended only to embellish the building, will prove the occasion of its fall.

'To every thing there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven,' said the wise man; but he said it before the invention of BABY-BALLS; an invention which has formed a kind of æra, and a most inauspicious one, in the annals of polished education. This modern device is a sort of triple conspiracy against the innocence, the health, and the happiness of children. Thus by factitious amusements, to rob them of a relish for the simple joys, the unbought delights, which naturally belong to their blooming season, is like blotting out spring from the year. To sacrifice the true and proper enjoyments of sprightly and happy children, is to make them pay a dear and disproportionate price for their artificial pleasures. They step at once from the nursery to the ball-room; and, by a change of habits as new as it is preposterous, are thinking of dressing themselves, at an age when they used to be dressing their dolls. Instead of bounding with the unrestrained freedom of little wood-nymphs over hill and dale, their cheeks flushed with health, and their hearts overflowing with happiness, these *gay* little creatures are shut up all the morning, demurely practising the *pas grave*, and transacting the serious business of acquiring a new step for the evening, with more cost of time and pains than it would have taken them to acquire twenty new ideas.

Thus they lose the amusements which properly belong to their smiling period, and unnaturally anticipate those pleasures (such as they are) which would come in, too much of course, on their introduction into fashionable life. The true pleasures of childhood are cheap and natural: for every object teems with delight to eyes and hearts new to the enjoyment of life; nay, the hearts of healthy children abound with a general disposition to mirth and joyfulness, even without a specific object to excite it: like our

first parent, in the world's first spring, when all was new and fresh, and gay about him,

> they live and move,
> And feel that they are happier than they know.

Only furnish them with a few simple and harmless materials, and a little, but not too much, leisure, and they will manufacture their own pleasure with more skill and success, and satisfaction, than they will receive from all that your money can purchase. Their bodily recreations should be such as will promote their health, quicken their activity, enliven their spirits, whet their ingenuity, and qualify them for their mental work. But, if you begin thus early to create wants, to invent gratifications, to multiply desires, to waken dormant sensibilities, to stir up hidden fires, you are studiously laying up for your children a store of premature caprice and irritability, of impatience and discontent.

While childhood preserves its native simplicity, every little change is interesting, every gratification is a luxury. A ride or a walk, a garland of flowers of her own forming, a plant of her own cultivating, will be a delightful amusement to a child in her natural state; but these harmless and interesting recreations will be dull and tasteless to a sophisticated little creature, nursed in such forced, and costly, and vapid pleasures. Alas! that we should throw away this first grand opportunity of working into a practical habit the moral of this important truth, that the chief source of human discontent is to be looked for, not in our real, but in our factitious wants; not in the demands of nature, but in the insatiable cravings of artificial desire!

When we see the growing zeal to crowd the midnight ball with these pretty fairies, we should be almost tempted to fancy it was a kind of pious emulation among the mothers to cure their infants of a fondness for vain and foolish pleasures, by tiring them out by this premature familiarity with them. And we should be so desirous to invent an excuse for a practice so inexcusable, that we should be ready to hope that they were actuated by something of the same principle which led the Spartans to introduce their sons to scenes of riot, that they might conceive an early disgust at vice! or possibly, that they imitated those Scythian mothers who used to plunge their new-born infants into the flood, thinking none to be worth saving who could not stand this early struggle for their lives; the greater part, indeed, as might have been expected, perished; but the parents took comfort, that if they were lost, the few who escaped would be the stronger for having been thus exposed!

To behold Lilliputian coquettes, projecting dresses, studying colours, assorting ribands, mixing flowers, and choosing feathers; their little hearts beating with hopes about partners and fears about rivals; to see their fresh cheeks pale after the midnight supper, their aching heads and unbraced nerves, disqualifying the little languid beings for the next day's task; and to hear the grave apology, 'that it is owing to the wine, the crowd, the heated room of the last night's ball;' all this, I say, would really be as ludicrous, if the mischief of the thing did not take off from the merriment of it, as any of the ridiculous and preposterous disproportions in the diverting travels of captain Lemuel Gulliver.

Under a just impression of the evils which we are sustaining from the principles and the practices of *modern* France, we are apt to lose sight of those deep and lasting mischiefs which so long, so regularly, and so systematically we have been importing from the same country, though in another form, and under another government. In one respect, indeed, the first were the more formidable, because we embraced the ruin without suspecting it; while we defeat the malignity of the latter, by detecting the turpitude, and defending ourselves against its contagion. This is not the place to descant on that levity of manners, that contempt of the sabbath, that fatal familiarity with loose principles, and those relaxed notions of conjugal fidelity, which have ofteen been transplanted into this country by women of fashion, as a too common effect of a long residence in a neighbouring nation; but it is peculiarly suitable to my subject to advert to another domestic mischief derived from the same foreign extraction; I mean the risks that have been run, and the sacrifices which have been made, in order to furnish our young ladies with the means of acquiring the French language in the greatest possible purity. Perfection in this accomplishment has been so long established as the supreme object; so long considered as the predominant excellence to which all other excellencies must bow down, that it would be hopeless to attack a law which fashion has immutably decreed, and which has received the stamp of long prescription. We must, therefore, be contented with expressing a wish, that this indispensable perfection could have been attained at the expense of sacrifices less important. It is with the greater regret I animad vert on this and some other prevailing practices as they are errors into which the wise and respectable have through want of consideration, or rather through want of firmness to resist the tyranny of fashion, sometimes fallen. It has not been unusual when mothers of rank and reputation have been asked how they ventured to intrust their daughters to foreigners, of whose principles they knew nothing, except that they were Roman Catholics, to answer, 'That they had taken care to be secure on that subject; for that it had been stipulated that *the question of religion should never be agitated between the teacher and the pupil.*' This, it must be confessed, is a most desperate remedy; it is like starving to death to avoid being poisoned. And who can help trembling for the event of that education, from which religion, as far as the governess is concerned, is thus formally and systematically excluded. Surely it would not be exacting too much, to suggest at least that an attention no less scrupulous should be exerted to insure the character of our children's instructor, for piety and knowledge, than is thought necessary to ascertain that she has nothing *patois* in ner dialect.

I would rate a correct pronunciation and an elegant phraseology at their just price, and I would not rate them low; but I would not offer up piety and principle as victims to sounds and

accents. And the matter is now made more easy; for whatever disgrace it might once have brought on an English lady to have had it suspected from her accent that she had the misfortune not to be born in a neighbouring country; some recent events may serve to reconcile her to the suspicion of having been bred in her own. A country, to which, (with all its sins, which are many!) the whole world is looking up with envy and admiration, as the seat of true glory and of comparative happiness! A country, in which the exile, driven out by the crimes of his own, finds a home! A country, to obtain the protection of which it was claim enough to be unfortunate; and no impediment to have been the subject of her direst foe! A country, which, in this respect, humbly imitating the Father of compassion, when it offered mercy to a suppliant enemy, never conditioned for merit, nor insisted on the virtues of the miserable as a preliminary to its own bounty!

'England! with all thy faults, I love thee still.'

CHAP. IV.

Comparison of the mode of female education in the last age with the present.

To return, however, to the subject of general education. We admit that a young lady may excel in speaking French and Italian; may repeat a few passages from a volume of extracts; play like a professor, and sing like a syren; have her dressing-room decorated with her own drawings, tables, stands, flower-pots, screens and cabinets; nay, she may dance like Sempronia* herself, and yet we shall insist that she may have been very badly educated. I am far from meaning to set no value whatever on these qualifications; they are all of them elegant, and many of them properly tend to the perfecting of a polite education. These things in their measure and degree may be done, but there are others which should not be left undone. Many things are becoming, but 'one thing is needful.' Besides, as the world seems to be fully apprised of the value of whatever tends to embellish life, there is less occasion here to insist on its importance.

But though a well-bred young lady may lawfully learn most of the fashionable arts; yet, let me ask, does it seem to be the true end of education to make women of fashion *dancers, singers, players, painters, actresses, sculptors, gilders, varnishers, engravers*, and *embroiderers?* Most *men* are commonly destined to some profession, and their minds are consequently turned each to its respective object. Would it not be strange if they were called out to exercise their profession, or to set up their trade, with only a little general knowledge of the trades and professions of all other men, and without any previous definite application to their own peculiar calling? The professions of ladies, to which the bent of *their* instruction should be turned, is that of daughters, wives, mothers, and mistresses of families. They should be therefore trained with a view to these several conditions, and be furnished with a stock of ideas, and principles, and qualifications and habits, ready to be applied and appropriated, as occasion may demand, to each of these respective situations. For though the arts which merely embellish life must claim admiration; yet when a man of sense comes to marry, it is a companion whom he wants, and not an artist. It is not merely a creature who can paint, and play, and sing, and draw, and dress, and dance; it is a being who can comfort and counsel him; one who can reason, and reflect, and feel and judge, and discourse and discriminate; one who can assist him in his affairs, lighten his cares, sooth his sorrows, purify his joys, strengthen his principles, and educate his chidren.

Almost any ornamental acquirement is a good thing, when it is not the best thing a woman has; and talents are admirable when not made to stand proxy for virtues. The writer of these pages is intimately acquainted with several ladies who, excelling most of their sex in the art of music, but excelling them also in prudence and piety, find little leisure or temptation amidst the delights and duty of a large and lovely family, for the exercise of this charming talent; they regret that so much of their own youth was wasted in acquiring an art which can be turned to so little account in married life, and are now conscientiously restricting their daughters in the portion of time allotted to its acquisition.

Far be it from me to discourage the cultivation of any existing talent; but may it not be questioned of the fond believing mother, whether talents like the spirits of Owen Glendower, though conjured by parental partiality with ever so loud a voice,

Yet will they come when you do call for them?

That injudicious practice, therefore, cannot be too much discouraged of endeavouring to create talents which do not exist in nature. *That their daughters shall learn every thing*, is so general a maternal maxim, that even unborn daughters, of whose expected abilities and conjectured faculties, it is presumed, no very accurate judgment can previously be formed, are yet predestined to this universality of accomplishments. This comprehensive maxim, thus almost universally brought into practice, at once weakens the general powers of the mind, by drawing off its strength into too great a variety of directions; and cuts up time into too many separate portions, by splitting it into such an endless multiplicity of employments. I know that I am treading on tender ground; but I cannot help thinking that the restless pains we take to cram up every little vacuity of life, by crowding one new thing upon another, rather creates a thirst for novelty than knowledge; and is but a well disguised contrivance to anticipate the keeping us in after-life more effectually from conversing with ourselves. The care taken to prevent *ennui* is but a creditable plan for promoting self-ignorance. We run from one occupation to another (I speak of those arts to which little intellect is applied) with a view to lighten the pressure of time; above all we fly to them to save us from our own thoughts; we fly to them to rescue us from ourselves; whereas we were

* See Cataline's Conspiracy.

thrown a little more on our own hands, we might at last be driven, by way of something to do, to try to get acquainted with our own hearts. But it is only one part of the general inconsistency of the human character, that with the person of all others we best love, we least like to converse and to form an intimacy; I mean ourselves. But though our being less absorbed by this busy trifling, which dignifies its inanity with the imposing name of occupation, might render us somewhat more sensible of the tedium of life; yet might not this very sensation tend to quicken our pursuit of a better? For an awful thought here suggests itself. If life be so long that we are driven to set at work every engine to pass away the tediousness of time; how shall we do to get rid of the tediousness of eternity? an eternity in which not one of the acquisitions which life has been exhausted in acquiring, will be of the least use? Let not then the soul be starved by feeding it on such unsubstantial aliment, for the mind can be no more nourished by these empty husks than the body can be fed with ideas and principles.

Among the boasted improvements of the present age, none affords more frequent matter of peculiar exultation, than the manifest superiority in the employment of the young ladies of our time over those of the good house-wives of the last century. It is matter of general triumph that they are at present employed in learning the polite arts, or in acquiring liberal accomplishments; while it is insisted that their forlorn predecessors wore out their joyless days in adorning the mansion-house with hideous hangings of sorrowful tapestry and disfiguring tent-stitch. Most cheerfully do I allow to the reigning modes their just claim of boasted superiority, for certainly there no piety in bad taste. Still, granting all the deformity of the exploded ornaments, one advantage attended them, the walls and the floors were not vain of their decorations; and it is to be feared, that the little person sometimes is. The flattery bestowed on the obsolete employments, for probably even *they* had their flatterers, furnished less aliment to selfishness, and less gratification to vanity: and the occupation itself was less likely to impair the delicacy and modesty of the sex, than the exquisite cultivation of personal accomplishments or personal decorations; and every mode which keeps down vanity and keeps back *self*, has at least a moral use. For while we admire the rapid movement of the elegant fingers of a young lady busied in working or painting her ball dress, we cannot help suspecting that her alacrity may be a little stimulated by the animating idea *how very well she shall look in it.* Nor was the industrious matron of Ithaca more soothed at her solitary loom with the sweet reflection that by her labour she was gratifying her filial and conjugal feelings, than the industrious but pleasure-loving damsel of Britain is gratified by the anticipated admiration which her ingenuity is procuring for her beauty.

Might not this propensity be a little checked, and an interesting feeling combined with her industry, were the fair artist habituated to exercise her skill in adorning some one else rather than herself? For it will add no lightness to the lightest head, nor vanity to the vainest heart, to solace her labours in reflecting how exceedingly the gown she is working will become her mother. This suggestion, trifling as it may seem, of habituating young ladies to exercise their taste and devote their leisure, not to the decoration of their own persons, but to the service of those to whom they are bound by every tender tie of love and duty, would not only help to repress vanity, but by thus associating the idea of industry with that of filial tenderness, would promote, while it gratified some of the best affections of the heart. The Romans (and it is mortifying on the subject of Christian education to be driven so often to refer to the superiority of pagans) were so well aware of the importance of keeping up a sense of family fondness and attachment by the very same means which promoted simple and domestic employment, that no citizen of note ever appeared in public in any garb but what was spun by his wife and daughter; and this virtuous passion was not confined to the early days of republican severity, but even in all the pomp and luxury of imperial power. Augustus preserved in his own family this simplicity of private manners.

Let me be allowed to repeat, that I mean not with preposterous praise to descant on the ignorance or the prejudices of past times, nor absurdly to regret the vulgar system of education which rounded the little circle of female acquirements within the limits of the sampler and the receipt book. Yet if a preference almost exclusive was then given to what was merely useful, a preference almost equally exclusive also is now assigned to what is merely ornamental. And it must be owned, that if the life of a young lady, formerly, too much resembled the life of a confectioner, it now too much resembles that of an actress: the morning is all rehearsal, and the evening is all preformance. And those who are trained in this regular routine, who are instructed in order to be exhibited, soon learn to feel a sort of impatience in those societies in which *their* kind of talents are not likely to be brought into play; the task of an auditor becomes dull to her who has been used to be a performer. Esteem and kindness become but cold substitutes to one who has been fed on plaudits and pampered with acclamations: and the excessive commendation which the visiter is expected to pay for his entertainment not only keeps alive the flame of vanity in the artist by constant fuel, but is not seldom exacted at a price which a veracity at all strict would grudge. The misfortune is, when a whole circle are obliged to be competitors who shall flatter most, it is not easy to be at once very sincere and very civil. And unfortunately, while the age is become so knowing and so fastidious, that if a young lady does not play like a public performer, no one thinks her worth attending; yet if she does so excel, some of the soberest of the admiring circle feel a strong alloy to their pleasure, on reflecting at what a vast expense of time this perfection probably must have been acquired.*

* That accurate judge of the human heart, madame de Maintenon, was so well aware of the danger resulting from some kinds of excellence, that after the young

The study of the fine arts, indeed, is forced on young persons, with or without genius (fashion, as was said before, having swallowed up that distinction) to such excess, as to vex, fatigue, and disgust those who have no talents and to determine them, as soon as they become free agents, to abandon all such tormenting acquirements. While by this incessant compulsion still more pernicious effects are often produced on those who actually possess genius; for the natural constant reference in the mind to that public performance for which they are sedulously cultivating this talent, excites the same passions of envy, vanity, and competition in the dilettanti performers, as might be supposed to stimulate professional candidates for fame and profit at public games and theatrical exhibitions. Is this emulation, is this spirit of rivalry, is this hunger after public praise the temper which prudent parents would wish to excite and foster. Besides, in *any* event the issue is not favourable if the young performers are timid; they disgrace themselves and distress their friends; if courageous, their boldness offends still more than their bad performance. Shall they then be studiously brought into situations in which failure discredits and success disgusts?

May I venture, without being accused of pedantry, to conclude this chapter with another reference to pagan examples? The Hebrews, Egyptians, and Greeks, believed that they could more effectually teach their youth maxims of virtue, by calling in the aid of music and poetry these maxims, therefore, they put into verses, and these verses were set to the most popular and simple tunes, which the children sang; thus was their love of goodness excited by the very instrument of their pleasure; and the senses, the taste, and the imagination, as it were, pressed into the service of religion, and morals. Dare I appeal to christian parents, if these arts are commonly used by *them*, as subsidiary to religion, and to a system of morals much more worthy of every ingenious aid and association, which might tend to recommend them to the youthful mind? Dare I appeal to Christian parents, whether music, which fills up no trifling portion of their daughter's time, does not fill it without any moral end, or even without any specific object? Nay, whether some of the favourite songs of polished societies are not amatory, are not Anacreontic, more than quite become the modest lips of innocent youth and delicate beauty?

CHAP. V.

On the religious employment of time.—On the manner in which holydays are passed.—Selfishness and inconsideration considered.—Dangers arising from the world.

There are many well-disposed parents, who, while they attend to these fashionable acquirements, do not neglect to infuse religious knowledge into the minds of their children; and having done this, are but too apt to conclude that they have done all, and have fully acquitted themselves of the important duties of education. For having, as they think, sufficiently grounded their daughters in religion, they do not scruple to allow them to spend almost the whole of their time exactly like the daughters of worldly people. Now, though it be one great point gained, to have imbued their young minds with the best knowledge, the work is not therefore by any means accomplished. 'What do ye more than others?' is a question which in a more extended sense, religious parents must be prepared to answer.

Such parents should go on to teach children the religious use of time, the duty of consecrating to God every talent, every faculty, every possession, and of devoting their whole lives to his glory. People of piety should be more peculiarly on their guard against a spirit of idleness, and a slovenly habitual wasting of time, because this practice, by not assuming a palpable shape of guilt, carries little alarm to the conscience. Even religious characters are in danger on this side; for not allowing themselves to follow the world in its excesses and diversions, they have consequently more time upon their hands; and instead of dedicating the time so rescued to its true purposes, they sometimes make as it were compensation to themselves for their abstinence from dangerous places of public resort, by an habitual frivolousness at home; by a superabundance of unprofitable small-talk, idle reading, and a quiet and dull frittering away of time. Their day perhaps has been more free from actual evil: but it will often be discovered to have been as unproductive as that of more worldly characters; and they will be found to have traded to as little purpose with their master's talents. But a Christian must take care to keep his conscience peculiarly alive to the unapparent, though formidable perils of unprofitableness.

To these, and to all, the author would earnestly recommend to accustom their children to pass at once from serious business to active and animated recreation; they should carefully preserve them from those long and torpid intervals between both, that languid indolence and spiritless trifling that merely getting rid of the day without stamping on it any characters of active goodness or of intellectual profit, that inane drowsiness which wears out such large portions of life in both young and old. It has, indeed, passed into an aphorism, that activity is necessary to virtue, even among those who are not apprised that it is also indispensable to happiness. So far are many parents from being sensible of this truth, that vacations from school are not merely allowed, but appointed to pass away in wearisome sauntering and indeterminate idleness, and this is done by erring tenderness, by way of converting the holydays into pleasure! Nay the idleness is specifically made over to the child's mind, as the strongest expression of the kindness of the parent! A dislike to learning is thus systematically excited by preposterously erecting indolence into a reward for application!

ladies of the court of Louis Quatorze had distinguished themselves by the performance of some dramatic pieces of Racine, when her friends told her how admirably they had played their parts. 'Yes,' answered this wise woman, 'so admirably that they shall never play again.'

And the promise of doing nothing is held out as the strongest temptation, as well as the best recompence, for having done well!

These, and such like errors of conduct arise from the latent, but very operative, principle of selfishness. This principle is obviously promoted by many habits and practice seemingly of little importance; and indeed selfishness is so commonly interwoven with vanity and inconsideration that I have not always thought it necessary to mark the distinction. They are alternately cause and effect; and are produced and reproduced by reciprocal operation. They are a joint confederacy, who are mutually promoting each other's strength and interest; they are united by almost inseparable ties, and the indulgence of either is the gratification of all. Ill-judging tenderness is in fact only a concealed self-love, which cannot bear to be a witness to the uneasiness which a present disappointment, or difficulty, or vexation, would cause to a darling child; but which yet does not scruple by improper gratification to store up for it future miseries, which the child will infallibly suffer, though it may be at a distant period, which the selfish mother does not disturb herself by anticipating, because she thinks she may be saved the pain of beholding.

Another principle, something different from this, though it may probably fall under the head of selfishness, seems to actuate some parents in their conduct towards their children: I mean a certain slothfulness of mind, a love of ease which imposes a voluntary blindness, and makes them not choose to see what will give them the trouble to combat. From the persons in question we frequently hear such expressions as these: 'Children will be children.'—'My children, I suppose are much like those of other people,' &c. Thus we may observe this dangerous and delusive principle frequently turning off with a smile from the first indications of those tempers, which from their fatal tendency ought to be very seriously taken up. I would be understood now as speaking to conscientious parents, who consider it as a general duty to correct the faults of their children, but who, from this indolence of mind, are extremely backward in *discovering* such faults, and are not very well pleased when they are pointed out by others. Such parents will do well to take notice, that whatever they consider it is a duty to *correct*, must be equally a duty to endeavour to *find out*. And this indolent love of ease is the more to be guarded against, as it not only leads parents into erroneous conduct towards their children, but is peculiarly dangerous to themselves. It is a fault frequently cherished from ignorance of its real character; for not bearing on it the strong features of deformity which mark many other vices, but on the contrary bearing some resemblance to virtue, it is frequently mistaken for Christian graces of patience, meekness, and forbearance, than which nothing can be more opposite; these proceeding from that Christian principle of self-denial, the other from self-indulgence.

In this connexion may I be permitted to remark on the practice at the tables of many families when the children are at home for the holydays? Every delicacy is forced upon them, with the tempting remark, 'that they cannot have this or that dainty at school.' They are indulged in irregular hours for the same motive, 'because they cannot have that indulgence at school.' Thus the natural seeds of idleness, sensuality, and sloth, are at once cherished, by converting the periodical visit at home into a season of intemperance, late hours, and exemption from learning. So that children are habituated, at an age when lasting associations are formed in the mind, to connect the idea of study with that of hardship, of happiness with gluttony, and of pleasure with loitering, feasting, or sleeping. Would it not be better, would it not be kinder, to make them combine the delightful idea of home, with the gratification of the social affections, the fondness of maternal love, the kindness, and warmth, and confidence of the sweet domestic attachments,

> —And all the charities
> Of father, son and brother?

I will venture to say, that those listless and vacant days, when the thoughts have no precise object; when the imagination has nothing to shape; when industry has no definitive pursuit; when the mind and the body have no exercise: and the ingenuity has no acquisition either to anticipate or to enjoy, are the longest, the dullest, and the least happy, which children of spirit and genius ever pass. Yes! it is a few short but keen and lively intervals of animated pleasure, snatched from between the successive labours and duties of a well-ordered, busy day, looked forward to with hope, enjoyed with taste, and recollected without remorse, which, both to men and to children, yield the truest portions of enjoyment. O snatch your offspring from adding to the number of those objects of supreme commiseration, who seek their happiness in doing nothing! The animal may be gratified by it, but the man is degraded. Life is but a short day; but it is a working day. Activity *may* lead to evil; but inactivity *cannot* be led to good.

Young ladies should also be accustomed to set apart a fixed portion of their time, as sacred to to the poor,* whether in relieving, instructing, or working for them; and the performance of this duty must not be left to the event of contingent circumstances, or operation of accidental impressions; but it must be established into a principle, and wrought into a habit. A specific portion of the day must be allotted to it, on which no common engagement must be allowed to intrench. Those periods of time, which are not *stated*, are seldom turned to their proper use; and nothing short of a regular plan (which must however be sometimes made to give way to cir-

* It would be a noble employment, and well becoming the tenderness of their sex, if ladies were to consider the superintendance of the poor as their immediate office. They are peculiarly fitted for it, for from their own habits of life they are more intimately acquainted with domestic wants than the other sex, and in certain instances of sickness and sufferings peculiar to themselves, they should be expected to have more sympathy; and they have obviously more leisure. There is a certain religious society distinguished by simplicity of dress, manners, and language, whose poor are perhaps better taken care of than any other; and one reason may be, that they are immediately under the inspection of the women.

cumstances) insures the conscientious discharge of any duty. This will help to furnish a powerful remedy for that selfishness, whose strong holds (the truth cannot be too often repeated) it is the grand business of Christian education perpetually to attack. If we were but aware how much better it makes ourselves to wish to see others better and to assist in making them so, we should find that the good done would be of as much importance by the habit of doing good, which it would induce in our own minds, as by its beneficial effects on the objects of our kindness.*

In what relates to pecuniary bounty, it will be requiring of young persons a very small sacrifice, if you teach them merely to give that money to the poor which properly belongs not to the child but to the parent; this sort of charity commonly subtracts little from their own pleasures, especially when what they have bestowed is immediately made up to them as a reward for their little fit of generosity. They will, on this plan, soon learn to give, not only for praise but for profit. The sacrifice of an orange to a little girl, or feather to a great one, given at the expense of their own gratification, would be a better lesson of charity on its right ground, than a considerable sum of money to be presently replaced by the parent. And it would be habituating them early to combine two ideas, which ought never to be separated, charity and self-denial.

As an antidote to selfishness, as well as to pride and indolence, they should also very early be taught to perform all the little offices in their power for themselves; they should be accustomed not to be insolently exercising their supposed prerogative of rank and wealth, by calling for servants where there is no real occasion; above all they should be accustomed to consider the domestics' hours of meals and rest as almost sacred, and the golden rule should be practicably and uniformly enforced, even on so trifling an occasion as ringing a bell, through mere wantonness, or self-love, or pride.

To check the growth of inconsiderateness, young ladies should early be taught to discharge their little debts with punctuality. They should be made sensible of the cruelty of obliging trades-people to call often for the money due to them; and of hindering and detaining those whose time is the source of their subsistence, under the pretence of some frivolous engagement, which ought to be made to bend to the comfort and advantage of others. They should conscientiously allow sufficient time for the execution of their orders; and with a Christian circumspection be careful not to drive work-people, by needless hurry, into losing their rest, or breaking the Sabbath. I have known a lady give her gown to a mantua-maker on the Saturday night, to whom she would not for the world say in so many words, 'You must work through the whole of Sunday,' while she was virtually compelling her to do so, by an injunction to bring the gown home finished on the Monday morning, on pain of her displeasure. To these hardships numbers are continually driven by good natured but inconsiderate employers. As these petty exactions of inconsideration furnish only a constant aliment to selfishness, let not a desire to counteract them be considered as leading to too minute details; nothing is too frivolous for animadversion, which tends to fix a bad habit in the superior, or to wound the feelings of the dependant.

Would it not be turning those political doctrines, which are now so warmly agitating, to a truly moral account, and give the best practical answer to the popular declamations on the inequality of human conditions, were the rich carefully to instruct their children to soften that inevitable inequality by the mildness and tenderness of their behaviour to their inferiors? This dispensation of God, which excites so many sinful murmurs, would, were it thus practically improved, tend to establish the glory of that Being who is now so often charged with injustice; for God himself is covertly attacked in many of the invectives against laws, governments, and the supposed arbitrary and unjust disproportion of ranks and riches.

This dispensation, thus properly improved, would, at once call into exercise the generosity, kindness, and forbearance of the superior; and the patience, resignation, and gratitude of the inferior; and thus, while we were vindicating the *ways* of Providence, we should be accomplishing his *plan*, by bringing into action those virtues of both classes, which would have little exercise had there been no inequality in station and fortune. Those more exalted persons who are so zealously contending for the privileges of rank and power, should never lose sight of the religious duties and considerate virtues which the possession of rank and power imposes on themselves; duties and virtues which should ever be inseparable from those privileges. As the inferior classes have little real right to complain of *laws* in this respect, let the great be watchful to give them as little cause to complain of *manners*. In order to this, let them carefully train up their children to supply by individual kindness those cases of hardship which laws cannot reach; let them obviate, by an active and well-directed compassion, those imperfections of which the best constructed human institutions must unavoidably partake; and, by the exercise of private bounty, early inculcated, soften those distresses which can never come under the cognizance of even the best government. Let them teach their offspring, that the charity of the rich should ever be subsidiary to the public provision in those numberless instances to which the most equal laws cannot apply. By such means every lesson of politics may be converted into a lesson of piety; and a spirit of condescending love might win over some whom a spirit of invective will only inflame.

Among the instances of negligence into which even religiously disposed parents and teachers are apt to fall, one is, that they are not sufficiently attentive in finding interesting employ-

* In addition to the instruction of the individual poor, and the superintendance of charity schools, ladies might be highly useful in assisting the parochial clergy in the adoption of that excellent plan for the instruction of the ignorant, suggested by the bishop of Durham in his last admirable charge to his clergy. It is with pleasure the author is enabled to add that the scheme has actually been adopted with good effect in that extensive diocese.

ment for the Sunday. They do not make a scruple of sometimes allowing their children to fill up the intervals of public worship with their ordinary employments and common school exercises. They are not aware that they are training their offspring to an early and a systematic profanation of the Sabbath by this custom; for to children, their tasks are their business; to them a French or Latin exercise is as serious an occupation as the exercise of a trade or profession is to a man; and if they are allowed to think the one right *now*, they will not be brought hereafter to think that the other is wrong: for the opinions and practices fixed at this important season are not easily altered: and an early habit becomes rooted into an inveterate prejudice. By this oversight even the friends of religion may be contributing eventually to that abolition of the Lord's day, so devoutly wished and so indefatigably laboured after by its enemies, as the desired preliminary to the destruction of whatever is most dear to christians. What obstruction would it offer to the general progress of youth, if all their Sunday exercises (which, with reading, composing, transcribing and getting by heart, might be extended to an entertaining variety) were adapted to the peculiar nature of the day?

Those whose own spirits and vigour of mind are exhausted by the amusements of the world, and who therefore grow faint and languid under the continuance of serious occupation, are not aware how different the case is with lively young people, whose spring of action has not been broken by habitual indulgence. They are not aware that a firm and well disciplined intellect wants, comparatively, little amusement. The mere change from one book to another, is a relief almost amounting to pleasure. But then the variation must be judiciously made, so that to novelty must be superadded comparative amusement; that is, the gradation should be made from the more to the less serious book. If care be thus taken that greater exertion of the mental powers shall not be required, when, through length of application, there is less ability or disposition to exert them; such a well ordered distinction, will produce on the mind nearly the same effect as a new employment.

It is not meant to impose on them such rigorous study as shall convert the day they should be taught to love into a day of burdens and hardships, or to abridge them of such innocent enjoyments as are compatable with a season of holy rest. It is intended merely to suggest that there should be a marked distinction in the nature of their employments and studies; for on the observance or neglect of this, as was before observed, their future notions and principles will in a good degree be formed. The Gospel, in rescuing the Lord's day from the rigorous bondage of the Jewish sabbath, never lessened the obligation to keep it holy, nor meant to sanction any secular occupation.* Christianity in lightening its austerities has not defeated the end of its institution; in purifying its spirit, it has not abolished its object.

* The strongest proof of this observation is the *conduct* of the first christians who had their instructions immediately from the Apostles.

Though the author, chiefly writing with a view to domestic instruction, has purposely avoided entering on the disputed question, whether a school or home education be best; a question which perhaps must generally be decided by the state of the individual home, and the state of the individual school; yet she begs leave to suggest one remark, which peculiarly belongs to a school education; namely, the general habit of converting the Sunday into a visiting day, by way of gaining time; as if the appropriate instructions of the Lord's day were the cheapest sacrifice which could be made to pleasure. Even in those schools in which religion is considered as an indispensable part of instruction, this kind of instruction is almost exclusively limited to Sundays: how then are girls ever to make any progress in this most important article, if they are habituated to lose the religious advantages of the school, for the sake of having more dainties for dinner abroad? This remark cannot be supposed to apply to the visits which children make to religious parents, and indeed it only applies to those cases where the school is a conscientious school, and the visit a trifling visit.

Among other subjects which engross a good share of worldly conversation, one of the most attracting is beauty. Many ladies have often a random way of talking rapturously on the general importance and the fascinating power of beauty, who are yet prudent enough to be very unwilling to let their own daughters find out they are handsome. Perhaps the contrary course might be safer. If the little listener were not constantly hearing that beauty is the best gift, she would not be so vain from fancying herself to be the best gifted. Be less solicitous, therefore, to conceal from her a secret, which, with all your watchfulness, she will be sure to find out, without your telling; but rather seek to lower the general value of beauty in her estimation. Use your daughter in all things to a different standard from that of the world. It is not by vulgar people and servants only that she will be told of her being pretty. She will be hearing it not only from gay ladies, but from grave men; she will be hearing it from the whole world around her. The antidote to the present danger is not now to be searched for; it must be already operating; it must have been provided for in the foundation laid in the general principle she has been imbibing before this particular temptation of beauty came in question. And this general principle is an habitual indifference to flattery. She must have learnt not to be intoxicated by the praise of the world. She must have learnt to estimate things by their intrinsic worth, rather than by the world's estimation. Speak to her with particular kindness and commendation of plain but amiable girls; mention with compassion such as are handsome but ill-educated; speak casually of some who were once thought pretty, but have ceased to be good; make use of the arguments arising from the shortness and uncertainty of beauty, as strong additional reasons for making that which is little valuable in itself, still less valuable. As it is a *new* idea which is always dangerous, you may thus break the force of this danger by al-

lowing her an early introduction to this inevitable knowledge, which would become more interesting, and of course more perilous by every additional year; and if you can guard against that fatal and almost universal error of letting her see that she is more loved on account of her beauty, her familiarity with the idea may be less dangerous than its novelty afterwards would prove.

But the great and constant peril to which young persons in the higher walks of life are exposed, is the prevailing turn and spirit of general conversation. Even the children of better families, who are well-instructed when at their studies, are yet at other times continually beholding the WORLD set up in the highest and most advantageous point of view. Seeing the world! knowing the world! standing well with the world! making a figure in the world! is spoken of as including the whole sum and substance of human advantages. They hear their education almost exclusively alluded to with reference to the *figure* it will enable them to make in the world. In almost all companies they hear all that the world admires spoken of with admiration; rank flattered, fame coveted, power sought, beauty idolized, money considered as the one thing needful, and as the atoning substitute for the want of all other things; profit held up as the reward of virtue, and worldly estimation as the just and highest prize of laudable ambition; and after the very spirit of the world has been thus habitually infused into them all the week, one cannot expect much effect from their being coldly and customarily told now and then on Sundays, that they must not 'love the world, nor the things of the world.' To tell them once in seven days that it is a sin to gratify an appetite which you have been whetting and stimulating the preceding six, is to require from them a power of self-control, which our knowledge of the impetuosity of the passions, especially in early age, should have taught us is impossible.

This is not the place to animadvert on the usual misapplication of the phrase, 'knowing the world;' which term is commonly applied, in the way of panegyric, to keen, designing, selfish, ambitious men, who study mankind in order to turn them to their own account. But in the true sense of the expression, the sense which christian parents would wish to impress on their children, to know the world is to know its emptiness, its vanity, its futility, and its wickedness. To know it is to despise it, to be on our guard against it, to labour to live above it; and in this view an obscure Christian in a village may be said to know the world better than a hoary courtier or wily politician. For how can they be said to *know* it who go on to love it, to be led captive by its allurements, to give their soul in exchange for its lying promises?

But while so false an estimate is often made in fashionable society of the real value of things; that is, while Christianity does *not* furnish the standard, and human opinion *does;* while the multiplying our desires is considered as a symptom of elegance, though to subdue those desires is the grand criterion of religion; while moderation is beheld as indicating a poorness of spirit, though to that very poverty of spirit the highest promise of the gospel is assigned; while worldly wisdom is sedulously enjoined by worldly friends, in contradiction to that assertion, 'that the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God;' while the praise of man is to be anxiously sought in opposition to that assurance, that 'the fear of man worketh a snare;' while they are taught all the week, that 'the friendship of the world' is the wisest pursuit; and on Sundays that 'it is enmity with God;' while these things are so (and that they are so in a good degree who will undertake to deny?) may we not venture to affirm that a Christian education, though it be not an impossible, is yet a very difficult work?

CHAP. VI.

ON THE EARLY FORMING OF HABITS.

On the necessity of forming the Judgment to direct those Habits.

It can never be too often repeated, that one of the great objects of education is the forming of habits. I may be suspected of having recurred too often, though hitherto only incidentally, to this topic. It is, however, a topic of such importance, that it will be useful to consider it somewhat more in detail; as the early forming of right habits on sound principles seems to be one of the grand secrets of virtue and happiness.

The forming of any one good habit seems to be effected rather by avoiding the opposite bad habit, and resisting every temptation to the opposite vice, than by the mere occasional practice of the virtue required.—*Humility*, for instance, is less an act than a disposition of the mind. It is not so much a single performance of some detached humble deed, as an incessant watchfulness against every propensity to pride. *Sobriety*, is not a prominent ostensible thing; it evidently consists in a series of negations, and not of actions. It is a conscientious habit of resisting every incentive to intemperance.—*Meekness* is best attained and exemplified by guarding against every tendency to anger, impatience and resentment. A habit of *attention* and application is formed by early and constant vigilance against a trifling spirit and a wandering mind. A habit of *industry*, by watching against the blandishments of pleasure, the waste of small portions of time, and the enchroachment of small indulgences.

Now, to stimulate us to an earnest desire of working any or all of these habits into the minds of children, it will be of importance to consider what a variety of uses each of them involves.

To take, for example, the case of moderation and temperance. It would seem to a superficial observer of no very great importance to acquire a habit of self-denial in respect either to the elegancies of decoration, or to the delicacies of the table, or to the common routine of pleasure; that there can be no occasion for an indifference to luxuries harmless in themselves; and no need of daily moderation in those persons who are possessed of affluence, and to whom there

fore, as the expense is no object, so the forbearance is thought of no importance. Those acts of self-denial, I admit, when contemplated by themselves, appear to be of no great value, yet they assume high importance, if you consider what it is to have, as it were, dried up the spring of only one importunate passion; if you reflect after any one such conquest is obtained, how easily, comparatively speaking, it is followed up by others.

How much future virtue and self-government, in more important things, may a mother therefore be securing to that child, who should always remain in as high a situation as she is in when the first foundations of this quality are laying; but should any reverse of fortune take place in the daughter, how much integrity and independence of mind also may be prepared for her, by the early excision of superfluous desires. She, who has been trained to subdue these propensities, will, in all probability be preserved from running into worthless company, merely for the sake of the splendor which may be attached to it. She will be rescued from the temptation to do wrong things for the sake of enjoyments from which she cannot abstain. She is delivered from the danger of flattering those whom she despises; because her moderate mind and well ordered desires do not solicit indulgences which could only be procured by mean compliances. For she will have been habituated to consider the *character* as the leading circumstance of attachment, and the splendor as an accident, which may or may not belong to it; but which, when it does, as it is not a ground of merit in the possessor, so it is not to be the ground of her attachment. The habit of self-control, in small as well as in great things involves in the aggregate less loss of pleasure, than will be experienced by disappointments in the mind ever yielding itself to the love of present indulgences, whenever those indulgences should be abridged or withdrawn.

She who has been accustomed to have an early habit of restraint exercised over all her appetites and temper; she who has been used to set bounds to her desires as a general principle, will have learned to withstand a passion for dress and personal ornaments; and the woman who has conquered this propensity has surmounted one of the most domineering temptations which assail the sex. While this seemingly little circumstance, if neglected, and the opposite habit formed, may be the first step to every successive error, and every consequent distress. Tho · women who are ruined by seduction in the lower classes, and those who are made miserable by ambitious marriages in the higher, will be more frequently found to owe their misery to an ungoverned passion for dress and show, than to motives more apparently bad. An habitual moderation in this article, growing out of a pure self-denying principle, and not arising from the affectation of a singularity, which may have more pride in it, than others feel in the indulgence of any of the things which this singularity renounces, includes many valuable advantages. Modesty, simplicity, humility, economy, prudence, liberality, charity, are almost inseparably, and not very remotely, connected with an habitual victory over personal vanity and a turn to personal expense. The inferior and less striking virtues are the smaller pearls, which serve to string and connect the great ones.

An early and unremitting zeal in forming the mind to a habit of attention not only produces the outward expression of good breeding, as one of its incidental advantages, but involves, or rather creates, better qualities than itself; while vacancy and inattention not only produce vulgar manners, but are usually the indication, if not of an ordinary, yet of a neglected understanding. To the habitually inattentive, books offer little benefit; company affords little improvement; while a self-imposed attention sharpens observation, and creates a spirit of inspection and inquiry, which often lifts a common understanding to a degree of eminence in knowledge, sagacity, and usefulness, which indolent or negligent genius does not always reach. A habit of attention exercises intellect, quickens discernment, multiplies ideas, enlarges the power of combining images and comparing characters, and gives a faculty of picking up improvement from circumstances the least promising; and gaining instruction from those slight but frequently recurring occasions, which the absent and the negligent turn to no account. Scarcely any thing or person is so unproductive as not to yield some fruit to the attentive and sedulous collector of ideas. But this is far from being the highest praise of such a person; she, who early imposes on herself a habit of strict attention to whatever she is engaged in, begins to wage early war with wandering thoughts, useless reveries, and that disqualifying train of busy, but unprofitable imaginations, by which the idle are occupied, and the absent are absorbed." She who keeps her intellectual powers in action, studies with advantage, herself, her books, and the world. Whereas they, in whose undisciplined minds vagrant thoughts have been suffered to range without restriction on ordinary occasions, will find they cannot easily call them home, when wanted to assist in higher duties. Thoughts, which are indulged in habitual wandering, will not be readily restrained in the solemnities of public worship or of private devotion.

But in speaking of the necessary habits, it must be noticed that the habit of unremitting *industry*, which is indeed closely connected with those of which we have just made mention, cannot be too early or too sedulously formed. Let not the sprightly and the brilliant reject indu· try as a plebian quality, as a quality to be exercised only by those who have their bread to earn, or their fortune to make. But let them respect it, and adopt it as an habit to which many elevated characters have, in a good measure, owed their distinction. The masters in science, the leaders in literature, legislators, and statesmen, even apostles and reformers would not, at least in so eminent a degree, have enlightened, converted, and astonished the world, had they not been eminent possessors of this sober and unostentatious quality. It is the quality to which the immortal Newton modestly ascribed his own vast attainments; who, when he was asked by what means he had been enabled to make that

successful progress which struck mankind with wonder, replied, that it was not so much owing to any superior strength of genius, as to an habit of patient thinking, laborious attention, and close application. We must, it is true, make some deductions for the humility of the speaker. Yet it is not overrating its value, to assert that industry is the sturdy and hard working pioneer, who by persevering labour removes obstructions, overcomes difficulties, clears intricacies, and thus facilitates the march, and aids the victories of genius.

An exact habit of *economy* is of the same family with the two foregoing qualities; and like them is the prolific parent of a numerous offspring of virtues. For want of the early ingrafting of this practice on its only legitimate stock —a sound principle of integrity—may we not, in too many instances in subsequent life, almost apply to the fatal effects of domestic profuseness, what Tacitus observes of a lavish profligacy in the expenditure of public money—that an exchequer which is exhausted by prodigality will probably be replenished by crimes.

Those who are early trained to scrupulous punctuality in the division of time, and an exactness to the hours of their childish business, will have learnt how much the economy of time is promoted by habits of punctuality, when they shall enter on the more important business of life. By getting one employment cleared away, exactly as the succeeding employment shall have a claim to be despatched, they will learn two things: that one business must not trench on the time which belongs to another business, and to set a value on those odd quarters of an hour, and even minutes which are so often lost between successive duties, for want of calculation, punctuality and arrangement.

A habit of *punctuality* is perhaps one of the earliest which the youthful mind may be made capable of receiving; and it is so connected with truth, with morals, and with the general good government of the mind, as to render it important that it should be brought into exercise on the smallest occasions. But I refrain from enlarging on this point as it will be discussed in another part of this work.*

It requires perhaps still more sedulity to lay early the first foundation of those interior habits which are grounded on watchfulness against such faults as do not often betray themselves by breaking out into open excess; and which there would therefore be less discredit in judging. It should more particularly make a part of the first elements of education, to try to infuse into the mind that particular principle which stands in opposition to those evil tempers, to which the individual pupil is more immediately addicted. As it cannot be followed up too closely, so it can hardly be set about too early. May we not borrow an important illustration of this truth from the fabulous hero of the Grecian story? He who was one day to perform exploits, which should fill the earth with his renown, began by conquering in his infancy; and it was a preliminary to his delivering the world from monsters in his riper years, that he should set out by strangling the serpents in his cradle.

* See Chapter on Definitions

It must however be observed that diligent care is to be exercised, that, together with the gradual formation of these and other useful *habits*, an adequate attention be employed to the forming of the *judgment*; to the framing such a sound constitution of mind, as shall supply the power of directing all the faculties of the understanding, and all the qualities of the heart, to keep their proper places and due bounds, to observe their just proportions, and maintain their right station, relation, order, and dependence.

For instance, while the young person's mind is trained to those habits of attention and industry, which we have been recommending; great care must be used that her judgment be so enlightened as to enable her to form sound notions with regard to what is really worthy her attentive pursuit, without which discriminating power, application would only be actively misemployed; and ardour and industry would but serve to lead her more widely from the right road of truth. Without a correct judgment she would be wasting her activity on what was frivolous, or exhausting it on what was mischievous. Without that ardour and activity we have been recommending she might only be 'weaving spiders' webs;' with it, if destitute of judgment, she would be 'hatching cockatrices' eggs.'

Again, if the judgment be not well informed as to the nature and true ends of temperance, the ill-instructed mind might be led into a superstitious reliance on the merits of self-denial; and resting in the letter of a few outward observances, without any consideration of the spirit of this christian virtue, might be led to infer that the kingdom of heaven was the *abstinence* from 'meat and drink,' and not 'peace, and righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost.'

The same well ordered judgment will also be required in superintending and regulating the habit of economy; for extravagance being rather a relative than a positive term, the true art of regulating expense, is not to proportion it to the fashion, or to the opinion or practice of others, but to our own station and to our own circumstances. Aristippus being accused of extravagance by one who was not rich, because he had given six crowns for a small fish, said to him, 'Why what would you have given?'—'Twelve pence,' answered the other. 'Then,' replied Aristippus, 'our economy is equal; for six crowns are no more to me than twelve pence are to you.'

It is the more important to enlighten the judgment in this point, because so predominant is the control of custom and fashion, that men of unfixed principle are driven to borrow other peoples' judgment of them, before they can venture to determine whether they themselves are rich or happy. These vain slaves to human opinion do not so often say, How ought I to act? or, What ought I to spend? as, What does the world think I ought to do? What do others think I ought to spend?

There is also a perpetual call for the interference of the judgment in settling the true notion of what meekness is, before we can adopt the practice without falling into error. We must apprize those on whose minds we are inculcating this amiable virtue, of the broad line of dis-

tinction between Christian meekness and that well-bred tone and gentle manner which passes current for it in the world. We must teach them also to distinguish between an humble opinion of our own ability to judge, and servile dereliction of truth and principle, in order to purchase the poor praise of indiscriminate compliance and yielding softness. We must lead them to distinguish accurately between honesty and obstinacy, between perseverance and perverseness, between firmness and prejudice. We must convince them that it is not meekness, but baseness, when through a dishonest dread of offending the prosperous, or displeasing the powerful, we forbear to recommend, or refuse to support, those whom it is our duty to recommend or to support. That it is selfishness and not meekness, when through fear of forfeiting any portion of our reputation, or risking our own favour with others, we refuse to bear our testimony to suspected worth or discredited virtue.*

CHAP. VII.

Filial obedience not the character of the age.—A comparison with the preceding age in this respect.—Those who cultivate the mind advised to study the nature of the soil.—Unpromising children often make strong characters.—Teachers too apt to devote their pains almost exclusively to children of parts.

Among the real improvements of modern times, and they are not a few, it is to be feared that the growth of filial obedience cannot be included. Who can forbear observing and regretting in a variety of instances, that not only sons but daughters have adopted something of that spirit of independence, and disdain of control, which characterize the times? And is it not too generally obvious that domestic manners are not slightly tinctured with the prevailing hue of public principles? The *rights of man* have been discussed, till we are somewhat wearied with the discussion. To these have been opposed, as the next stage in the progress of illumination, and with more presumption than prudence, *the rights of women*. It follows, according to the natural progression of human things, that the next influx of that irradiation which our enlighteners are pouring in upon us, will illuminate the world with grave descants on the *rights of youth, the rights of children, the rights of babies!*

This revolutionary spirit in families suggests the remark, that among the faults with which it had been too much the fashion of recent times to load the memory of the incomparable Milton, one of the charges brought against his private character (for with his political character we have here nothing to do) has been, that he was so severe a father as to have compelled his daughters, after he was blind, to read aloud to him, for his sole pleasure, Greek and Latin authors, of which they did not understand a word. But this is in fact nothing more than an instance of the strict domestic regulations of the age in which Milton lived; and should not be brought forward as a proof of the severity of his individual temper. Nor indeed in any case should it ever be considered as an hardship for an affectionate child to amuse an afflicted parent, even though it should be attended with a heavier sacrifice of her own pleasure than that produced in the present instance.*

Is the author then inculcating the harsh doctrine of paternal austerity? By no means. It drives the gentle spirit to artifice, and the rugged to despair. It generates deceit and cunning, the most hopeless and hateful in the whole catalogue of female failings. Ungoverned anger in the teacher, and inability to discriminate between venial errors and premeditated offence, though they may lead a timid creature to hide wrong tempers, or to conceal bad actions, will not help her to subdue the one or correct the other. The dread of severity will drive terrified children to seek, not for reformation, but for impunity. A readiness to forgive them promotes frankness: and we should, above all things, encourage them to be frank, in order to come at their faults. They have not more faults for being open, they only *discover* more; and to know the worst of the character we have to regulate will enable us to make it better.

Discipline, however, is not cruelty, and restraint is not severity. A discriminating teacher will appreciate the individual character of each pupil, in order to appropriate her management. We must strengthen the feeble, while we repel the bold. We cannot educate by a *receipt;* for after studying the best rules, and after digesting them into the best system, much must depend on contingent circumstances, for that which is good may yet be inapplicable. The cultivator of the human mind must, like the gardener, study diversities of soil, or he may plant diligently and water faithfully with little fruit. The skilful labourer knows that even where the surface is not particularly promising, there is often a rough strong ground which will amply repay the trouble of breaking it up; yet we are often most taken with a soft surface, though it conceal a shallow depth, because it promises present reward and little trouble. But strong and pertinacious tempers, of which per-

* To this criminal timidity, madame de Maintenon, a woman of parts and piety, sacrificed the ingenious and amiable Racine; whom, while she had taste enough to admire, she had not the generosity to defend, when the royal favour was withdrawn from him. A still darker cloud hangs over her fame, on account of the selfish neutrality she maintained in not interposing her good offices between the resentments of the king and the sufferings of the Hugonots. It is a heavy aggravation of her fault, that she herself had been educated in the faith of these persecuted people.

* In spite of this too prevailing spirit, and at a time when, by an inverted state of society, sacrifices of ease and pleasure are rather exacted by children from parents, than required by parents from children, numberless instances might be adduced of filial affection truly honourable to the present period. And the author records with pleasure, that she has seen amiable young ladies of high rank conducting the steps of a blind but illustrious parent with true filial fondness; and has often contemplated, in another family, the interesting attentions of daughters who were both hands and eyes to an infirm and nearly blind father. It is but justice to repeat that these examples are not taken from that middle rank of life which Milton filled, but from the daughters of the highest officers in the state.

haps obstinacy is the leading vice, under skilful management often turn out steady and sterling characters; while from softer clay a firm and vigorous virtue is but seldom produced. Pertinacity is often principle, which wants nothing but to be led to its true object; while the uniformly yielding, and universally accommodating spirit, is not seldom the result of a feeble tone of morals, of a temper eager for praise and acting for reward.

But those revolutions in character cannot be effected by a mere education. Plutarch had observed that the medical science would never be brought to perfection till poisons should be converted into physic. What our late improvers in natural science have done in the medical world, by converting the most deadly ingredients into instruments of life and health, Christianity with a sort of divine alchymy has effected in the moral world, by that transmutation which makes those passions which have been working for sin become active in the cause of religion. The violent temper of Saul of Tarsus, which was 'exceedingly mad' against the saints of God, did God see fit to convert into that burning zeal which enabled Paul the apostle to labour so unremittingly for the conversion of the gentile world. Christianity indeed does not so much give us new affections or faculties, as give a new direction to those we already have. She changes that sorrow of the world which worketh death into 'godly sorrow which worketh repentance.' She changes our anger against the persons we dislike into hatred of their sins. 'The fear of man which worketh a snare,' she transmutes into 'that fear of God which worketh salvation.' That religion does not extinguish the passions, but only alters their object, the animated expressions of the fervid apostle confirm—'Yea, what *fearfulness*; yea, what *clearing of yourselves*; yea, what *indignation*; yea, what *fear*; yea, what *vehement desire*; yea, what *zeal*; yea, what *revenge*.*

Thus, by some of the most troublesome passions of our nature being converted by the blessing of God on a religious education to the side of virtue, a double purpose is effected. Because it is the character of the passions never to observe a neutrality. If they are no longer rebels, they become auxiliaries; and the accession of strength is doubled, because a foe subdued is an ally obtained. For it is the effect of religion on the passions, that when she siezes the enemy's garrison, she does not content herself with defeating its future mischiefs, she does not destroy the works, she does not burn the arsenal and spike the cannon; but the artillery she seizes, she turns to her own use; she attacks in her turn, and plants its whole force against an enemy from whom she has taken it.

But while I would deprecate harshness, I would enforce discipline; and that not merely on the ground of religion, but of happiness also. One reason, not seldom brought forward by tender but mistaken mothers as an apology for an unbounded indulgence, especially to weakly children, is, that they probably will not live to enjoy the world when grown up, and that therefore they would not abridge the little pleasure they may enjoy at the present, lest they should be taken out of the world without having tasted any of its delights. But a slight degree of observation would prove that this is an error in judgment as well as in principle. For omitting any considerations respecting their future welfare, and entering only into their immediate interests; it is an indisputable fact that children who know no control, whose faults encounter no contradiction, and whose humours experience constant indulgence, grow more irritable and capricious, invent wants, create desires, lose all relish for the pleasures which they know they may reckon upon; and become perhaps more miserable than even those unfortunate children who labour under the more obvious and more commiserated misfortune of suffering under the tyranny of unkind parents.

An early habitual restraint is peculiarly important to the future character and happiness of women. A judicious, unrelaxing, but steady and gentle curb on their tempers and passions can alone insure their peace and establish their principles. It is a habit which cannot be adopted too soon, nor persisted in too pertinaciously. They should when very young be inured to contradiction. Instead of hearing their *bon mots* treasured up and repeated till the guests are tired, and till the children begin to think it dull, when they themselves are not the little heroines of the theme, they should be accustomed to receive but moderate praise for their vivacity or their wit, though they should receive just commendation for such qualities as have more worth than splendour.

Patience, diligence, quiet, and unfatigued perseverance, industry, regularity, and economy of time, as these are the dispositions I would labour to excite, so these are the qualities I would warmly commend. So far from admiring genius, or extolling its prompt effusions, I would rather intimate that excellence, to a certain degree, is in the power of every competitor: that it is the vanity of over-valuing herself for supposed original powers, and slackening exertion in consequence of that vanity, which often leave the lively ignorant, and the witty superficial.—A girl who overhears her mother tell the company that she is a genius, and is so quick, that she never thinks of applying to her task till a few minutes before she is to be called to repeat it, will acquire such a confidence in her own abilities, that she will be advancing in conceit as she is falling short in knowledge. Whereas, if she were made to suspect that her want of application rather indicated a deficiency than a superiority in her understanding, she would become industrious in proportion as she became modest; and by thus adding the diligence of the humble to the talents of the ingenious, she might really attain a degree of excellence, which mere quickness of parts, too lazy, because too proud to apply, seldom attains.

Girls should be led to distrust their own judgment; they should learn not to murmur at expostulation; they should be accustomed to expect and to endure opposition. It is a lesson with which the world will not fail to furnish them; and they will not practise it the worse for having learnt it the sooner. It is of the last im-

* 2 Corinthians, vii. 1.

portance to their happiness, even in this life, that they should early acquire a submissive temper and a forbearing spirit. They must endure to be thought wrong sometimes, when they cannot but feel they are right. And while they should be anxiously aspiring to do well, they must not expect always to obtain the praise of having done so. But while a gentle demeanour is inculcated, let them not be instructed to practise gentleness merely on the low ground of its being decorous, and feminine, and pleasing, and calculated to attract human favour: but let them be carefully taught to cultivate it on the high principle of obedience to Christ; on the practical ground of labouring after conformity to HIM, who, when he proposed himself as a perfect pattern of imitation, did not say, learn of me, for I am great, or wise, or mighty, but 'learn of me, for I am meek and lowly:' and who graciously promised that the reward should accompany the practice, by encouragingly adding, 'and ye shall find rest to your souls.' Do not teach them humility on the ordinary ground that vanity is *unamiable*, and that no one will *love* them if they are proud; for that will only go to correct the exterior, and make them soft and smiling hypocrites. But inform them, that 'God resisteth the proud,' while 'them that are meek he shall guide in judgment, and such as are gentle, them shall he teach his way.' In these as in all other cases, an habitual attention to the *motives* should be carefully substituted in their young hearts, in the place of too much anxiety about the *event* of actions. Principles, aims, and intentions should be invariably insisted on, as the only true ground of right practice, and they should be carefully guarded against too much solicitude for that human praise which attaches to appearances as much as to realities, to success more than to desert.

Let me repeat, without incurring the censure of tautology, that it will be of vast importance not to let slip the earliest occasions of working gentle manners into an habit on their only true foundation, Christian meekness For this purpose I would again urge your calling in the example of our Redeemer in aid of his precepts. Endeavour to make your pupil feel that all the wonders exhibited in his life do not so overwhelm the awakened heart with rapture, love, and astonishment, as the perpetual instances of his humility and meekness, with which the Gospel abounds. Stupendous miracles, exercises of infinite power prompted by infinite mercy, are actions which we should naturally enough conceive as growing out of omnipotence and divine perfection: but silence under cruel mockings, patience under reproach, gentleness of demeanor under unparalleled injuries; these are perfections of which unassisted nature not only has no conception in a Divine Being, but at which it would revolt, had not the reality been exemplified by our perfect pattern. Healing the sick, feeding the multitude, restoring the blind, raising the dead, are deeds of which we could form some adequate idea, as necessarily flowing from Almighty goodness: but to wash his disciples' feet—to preach the Gospel to the *poor*—to renounce not only ease, for that heroes have done on human motives—but to renounce praise, to forgive his persecutors, to love his enemies, to pray for his murderers with his last breath;—these are things which, while they compel us to cry out with the centurion, 'Truly this was the Son of God,' should remind us, that they are not only *adorable* but *imitable* parts of his character. These are not speculative and barren doctrines which he came to preach to Christians, but living duties which he meant to entail on them; symbols of their profession; tests of their discipleship. These are perfections which we are not barely to contemplate with holy awe and distant admiration, as if they were restricted to the *divine* nature of ou· Redeemer; but we must consider them as suited to the human nature also, which he condescended to participate. In *contemplating*, we must *imitate;* in admiring we must practise; and in our measure and degree go and do likewise. Elevate your thoughts for one moment to this standard (and you should never allow yourself to be contented with a lower) and then go, if you can, and teach your children to be mild, and soft, and gentle on worldly grounds, on human motives, as an external attraction, as a decoration to their sex, as an appendage to their rank, as an expression of their good breeding.

There is a custom among teachers, which is not the more right for being common; they are apt to bestow an undue proportion of pains on children of the best capacity, as if only geniuses were worthy of attention. They should reflect that in moderate talents, carefully cultivated, we are perhaps to look for the chief happiness and virtue of society. If superlative genius had been generally necessary, its existence would not have been so rare; for Omnipotence could easily have made those talents common which we now consider as extraordinary, had they been necessary to the perfection of his plan. Besides, while we are conscientiously instructing children of moderate capacity, it is a comfort to reflect, that if no labour will raise them to a high degree in the scale of intellectual distinction, yet they may be led on to perfection in that road in which 'a wayfaring man, though simple shall not err.' And when a mother feels disposed to repine that her family is not likely to exhibit a group of future wits and growing beauties, let her console herself by looking abroad into the world, where she will quickly perceive that the monopoly of happiness is not engrossed by beauty, nor that of virtue by genius.

Perhaps mediocrity of parts was decreed to be the ordinary lot, by way of furnishing a stimulus to industry, and strengthening the motives to virtuous application. For is it not obvious that moderate abilities, carefully carried to that measure of perfection of which they are capable, often enables their possessors to outstrip, in the race of knowledge and of usefulness, their more brilliant but less persevering competitors? It is with mental endowments, as with other rich gifts of Providence; the inhabitant of the luxuriant southern clime, where nature has done every thing in the way of vegetation, indolently lays hold on this very plea of fertility which should animate his exertions, as a reason for doing nothing himself; so that the soil which teems with such encouraging abun

dance leaves the favoured possessor idle, and comparatively poor: whilst the native of the less genial region, supplying by his labours the deficiencies of his lot, overtakes his more favoured competitor; by substituting industry for opulence, he improves the riches of his native land beyond that which is blessed with warmer suns, and thus vindicates Providence from the charge of partial distribution.

A girl who has docility will seldom be found to want understanding sufficient for all the purposes of an useful, a happy, and a pious life. And it is as wrong for parents to set out with too sanguine a dependence on the figure their children are to make in life, as it is unreasonable to be discouraged at every disappointment. Want of success is so far from furnishing a motive for relaxing their energy that it is a reason for redoubling it. Let them suspect their own plans, and reform them; let them distrust their own principles, and correct them. The generality of parents do too little; some do much, and miss their reward, because they look not to any strength beyond their own: after much is done, much will remain undone: for the entire regulation of the heart and affections is not the work of education alone, but is effected by the operation of divine grace. Will it be accounted enthusiasm to suggest, 'that the fervent effectual prayer of a righteous *parent* availeth much?' and to observe that perhaps the reason why so many anxious mothers fail of success is, because they repose with confidence in their own skill and labour, neglecting to look to Him without whose blessing they do but labour in vain?

On the other hand, is it not to be feared that some pious parents have fallen into an error of an opposite kind? From a full conviction that human endeavours are vain, and that it is God alone who can change the heart, they are earnest in their prayers, but not so earnest in their endeavours.—Such parents should be reminded, that if they do not add their exertions to their prayers, their children are not likely to be more benefited than the children of those who do not add their prayers to their exertions. What God has joined, let no man presume to separate. It *is* the work of God, we readily acknowledge, to implant religion in the heart, and to maintain it there as a ruling principle of conduct. And is it not the same God which causes the corn to grow? Are not our natural lives constantly preserved by His power? Who will deny that in Him we live, and move, and have our being? But how are these works of God carried on? By *means* which he has appointed. By the labour of the husbandman the corn is made to grow; by food the body is sustained; and by religious instruction God is pleased to work upon the human heart. But unless we diligently plough, and sow, and weed, and manure, have we any right to depend on the refreshing showers and ripening suns of heaven, for the blessing of an abundant harvest? As far as *we* see the ways of God, all his works are carried on by *means*. It becomes, therefore, our duty to use the means, and trust in God; to remember that God will not work without the means; and that the means can effect nothing without his blessing. 'Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God must give the increase. But to what does he give the increase? To the *exertions* of Paul and Apollos. It is never said, because God only can give the increase, that Paul and Apollos may spare their labour.

It is one grand object to give the young probationer just and sober views of the world on which she is about to enter. Instead of making her bosom bound at the near prospect of emancipation from her instructors; instead of teaching her young heart to dance with premature flutterings as the critical winter draws near in which *she is to come out;* instead of raising a tumult in her busy imagination at the approach of her first *grown up ball*, an event held out as forming the first grand epocha of a female life, as the period from which a fresh computation, fixing the pleasures and independence of womanhood, is to be dated; instead of this, endeavour to convince her, the world will not turn out to be that scene of unvarying and never-ending delights which she has perhaps been led to expect, not only from the sanguine temper and warm spirits natural to youth, but from the value she has seen put on those showy accomplishments which have too probably been fitting her for her exhibition in life. Teach her that this world is not a stage for the display of superficial or even of shining talent, but for the strict and sober exercise of fortitude, temperance, meekness, faith, diligence, and self-denial; of her due performance of which Christian graces, angels will be spectators, and God the judge. Teach her that human life is not a splendid romance, spangled over with brilliant adventures, and enriched with extraordinary occurrences, and diversified with wonderful incidents; lead her not to expect that it will abound with scenes which will call extraordinary qualities and wonderful powers into perpetual action; and for which, if she acquit herself well, she will be rewarded with proportionate fame and certain commendation. But apprize her that human life is a true history, many passages of which will be dull, obscure, and uninteresting; some perhaps tragical; but that whatever gay incidents and pleasing scenes may be interspersed in the progress of the piece, yet, finally 'one event happeneth to all:' to all there is one awful and infallible catastrophe. Apprize her that the estimation which mankind forms of merit is not always just, nor is its praise very exactly proportioned to desert; tell her that the world weighs actions in far different scales from 'the balance of the sanctuary,, and estimates worth by a far different standard from that of the Gospel. Apprize her that while her purest intentions may be sometimes calumniated, and her best actions misrepresented, she will on the other hand, be liable to receive commendation on occasions wherein her conscience will tell her she has not deserved it; and that she may be extolled by others for actions for which, if she be honest, she will condemn herself.

Do not, however, give her a gloomy and discouraging picture of the world, but rather seek to give her a just and sober view of the part she will have to act in it. And restrain the impetuosity or hope, and cool the ardour of expec-

tation, by explaining to her, that this part, even in her best estate, will probably consist in a succession of petty trials, and a round of quiet duties, which, if well performed, though they will make little or no figure in the book of fame, will prove of vast importance to her in that day when *another* 'book is opened, and the judgment is set, and every one will be judged according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or bad.'

Say not that these just and sober views will cruelly wither her young hopes, blast her budding prospects, and deaden the innocent satisfactions of life. It is not true. There is, happily, an active spring in the mind of youth which bounds with fresh vigour and uninjured elasticity from any such temporary depression. And though her feelings, tastes and passions, will all be against you, if you set before her a faithful delineation of life, yet it will be something to get her judgment on your side. It is no unkind office to assist the short view of youth with the aids of long-sighted experience; to enable them to discover spots in the brightness of that world which dazzles them in prospect, though it is probable they will after all choose to believe their own eyes, rather than the offered glass.

CHAP. VIII.

On female study, and initiation into knowledge.—Error of cultivating the imagination to the neglect of the judgment.—Books of reasoning recommended.

As this little work by no means assumes the character of a general scheme of education, the author has purposely avoided expatiating largely on any kind of instruction, but as it happens to be connected, either immediately or remotely with objects of a moral or religious nature. Of course she has been so far from thinking it necessary to enter into the enumeration of those popular books which are used in general instruction, that she has purposely forborn to mention any. With such books the rising generation is far more copiously and ably furnished than any that has preceded it; and out of an excellent variety the judicious instructor can hardly fail to make such a selection as shall be beneficial to the pupil.

But while due praise ought not to be withheld from the improved methods of communicating the elements of general knowledge; yet is there not some danger that our very advantages may lead us into error, by causing us to repose so confidently on the multiplied helps which facilitate the entrance into learning, as to render our pupils superficial through the very facility of acquirement? Where so much is done for them, may they not be led to do too little for themselves? and besides that exertion may slacken for want of a spur, may there not be a moral disadvantage in possessing young persons with the notion that learning may be acquired without diligence, and knowledge be attained without labour? Sound education never can be made a 'primrose path of dalliance.' Do what we will we cannot cheat children into learning, or play them into knowledge, according to the conciliating smoothness of the modern creed, and the selfish indolence of the modern habits. There is no idle way to any acquisitions which really deserve the name. And as Euclid, in order to repress the impetuous vanity of greatness, told his sovereign that there was no royal way to geometry, so the fond mother may be assured that there is no short cut to any other kind of learning; no privileged by-path cleared from the thorns and briars of repulse and difficulty, for the accommodation of opulent inactivity or feminine weakness. The tree of knowledge, as a punishment, perhaps, for its having been at first unfairly tasted cannot now be claimed without difficulty; and this very circumstance serves afterwards to furnish not only literary pleasures, but moral advantages. For the knowledge which is acquired by unwearied assiduity, is lasting in the possession, and sweet to the possessor; both perhaps in proportion to the cost and labour of the acquisition. And though an able teacher ought to endeavour, by improving the communicating faculty in himself (for many know what they cannot teach) to soften every difficulty; yet in spite of the kindness and ability with which he will smooth every obstruction, it is probably among the wise institutions of Providence that great difficulties should still remain. For education is but an initiation into that life of trial to which we are introduced on our entrance into this world It is the first breaking into that state of toil and labour to which we are born, and to which sin has made us liable; and in this view of the subject the pains taken in the acquisition of learning may be converted to higher uses than such as are purely literary.

Will it not be ascribed to a captious singularity, if I venture to remark that real knowledge and real piety, though they may have gained in many instances, have suffered in others from that profusion of little, amusing, sentimental books with which the youthful library overflows? Abundance has its dangers as well as scarcity. In the first place may not the multiplicity of these alluring little works increase the natural reluctance to those more dry and uninteresting studies of which, after all, the rudiments of every part of learning *must* consist? And secondly, is there not some danger (though there are many honourable exceptions) that some of those engaging narratives may serve to infuse into the youthful heart a sort of spurious goodness, a confidence of virtue, a parade of charity? And that the benevolent actions with the recital of which they abound, when they are not made to flow from any source but feeling, may tend to inspire a self-complacency, a self-gratulation, 'a stand by, for I am holier than thou!' May not the success with which the good deeds of the little heroes are uniformly crowned; the invariable reward which is made the instant concomitant of well doing, furnish the young reader with false views of the condition of life, and the nature of the divine dealings with men? May they not help to suggest a false standard of morals, to infuse a

love of popularity and an anxiety for praise, in the place of that simple and unostentatious rule of doing whatever good we do, *because it is the will of God?* The universal substitution of this principle would tend to purify the worldly morality of many a popular little story. And there are few dangers which good parents will more carefully guard against than that of giving their children a mere political piety; that sort of religion which just goes to make people more respectable, and to stand well with the world; a religion which is to save appearances without inculcating realities; a religion which affects to 'preach peace and good will to men,' but which forgets to give 'glory to God in the highest.'*

There is a certain precocity of mind which is much helped on by these superficial modes of instruction; for frivolous reading will produce its correspondent effect, in much less time than books of solid instruction; the imagination being liable to be worked upon, and the feelings to be set a-going, much faster than the understanding can be opened and the judgment enlightened. A talent for conversation should be the result of instruction, not its precursor; it is a golden fruit when suffered to ripen gradually on the tree of knowledge; but if forced in the hot-bed of a circulating library, it will turn out worthless and vapid in proportion as it was artificial and premature. Girls who have been accustomed to devour a multitude of frivolous books will converse and write with a far greater appearance of skill as to style and sentiment at twelve or fourteen years old, than those of a more advanced age, who are under the discipline of severer studies: but the former having early attained to that low standard which had been held out to them, become stationary; while the latter, quietly progressive, are passing through just gradations to a higher strain of mind; and those who early begin with talking and writing like women commonly end with thinking and acting like children.

I would not however prohibit such works of imagination as suit this early period. When moderately used they serve to stretch the faculties and expand the mind: but I should prefer works of vigorous genius and pure unmixed fable to many of those tame and more affected moral stories, which are not grounded on Christian principle. I should suggest the use on the one hand of original and acknowledged fictions: and on the other, of accurate and simple facts; so that truth and fable may ever be kept separate and distinct in the mind. There is something that kindles fancy, awakens genius and excites new ideas in many of the bold fictions of the east. And there is one peculiar merit in the Arabian and some other Oriental tales, which is, that they exhibit striking, and in many respects faithful views of the manners, habits, customs, and religion of their respective countries; so that some tincture of real local information is acquired by the perusal of the wildest fable, which will not be without its use in aiding the future associations of the mind in all that relates to eastern history and literature.

The irregular fancy of women is not sufficiently subdued by early application, nor tamed by labour, and the kind of knowledge they commonly do acquire is early attained; and being chiefly some slight acquisition of the memory, something which is given them to get off by themselves, and not grounded in their minds by comment and conversation, it is easy lost. The superficial *question*-and-*answer*-way for instance, in which they often learn history, furnishes the mind with little to lean on: the events being detached and separated, the actions having no links to unite them with each other; the characters not being interwoven by mutual relation: the chronology being reduced to disconnected dates, instead of presenting an unbroken series; of course, neither events, actions, characters, nor chronology, fasten themselves on the understanding, but rather float in the memory as so many detached episodes, than contribute to form the mind and to enrich the judgment of the reader, in the important science of men and manners.

The swarms of *Abridgments*, *Beauties*, and *Compendiums*, which form too considerable a part of a young lady's library, may be considered in many instances as an infallible receipt for making a superficial mind. The *names* of the renowned characters in history thus become familiar in the mouths of those who can neither attach to the ideas of the person, the series of his actions, nor the peculiarities of his character. A few fine passages from the poets (passages perhaps which derived their chief beauty from their position and connexion) are huddled together by some extract-maker, whose brief and disconnected patches of broken and discordant materials, while they inflame young readers with the vanity of reciting, neither fill the mind nor form the taste, and it is not difficult to trace back to their shallow sources the hackneyed quotations of certain *accomplished* young ladies, who will be frequently found not to have come legitimately by any thing they know. I mean not to have drawn it from its true spring, the original works of the author from which some *beauty-monger* has severed it. Human inconsistency in this, as in other cases, wants to combine two irreconcileable things; it strives to unite the reputation of knowledge with the pleasures of knowledge, forgetting that nothing that is valuable can be obtained without sacrifices, and that if we would purchase knowledge, we must pay for it the fair and lawful price of time and industry. For this extract-reading, while it accommodates itself to the convenience, illustrates the character of the age in which we live. The appetite for pleasure, and that love of ease and indolence which is generated by it, leave little time or taste for sound improvement; while the vanity, which is equally a characteristic of the existing period, puts in its claim also for indulgence, and contrives to figure away by these little snatches of ornamental reading, caught in the short intervals of successive amusements.

* An ingenious (and in many respects useful) French Treatise on Education, has too much encouraged this political piety, by considering religion as a thing of human invention, rather than of divine institution; as a thing creditable, rather than commanded, by erecting the doctrine of expediency in the room of Christian simplicity; and wearing away the spirit of truth, by the substitution of occasional deceit, equivocation subterfuge and mental reservation.

Besides, the taste, thus pampered with delicious morsels, is early vitiated. The young reader of these *clustered beauties* conceives a disrelish for every thing which is plain, and grows impatient, if obliged to get through those equally necessary though less showy parts of a work, in which perhaps the author gives the best proof of his judgment by keeping under that occasional brilliancy and incidental ornament, of which these superficial students are in constant pursuit. In all well-written books, there is much that is good which is not dazzling; and these shallow critics should be taught, that it is for the embellishment of the more tame and uninteresting parts of his work, that the judicious poet commonly reserves those flowers, whose beauty is defaced when they are plucked from the garland into which he had so skilfully woven them.

The remark, however, as far as it relates to abridgments, is by no means of general application; there are many valuable works which from their bulk would be almost inaccessible to a great number of readers, and a considerable part of which may not be generally useful. Even in the best written books there is often superfluous matter; authors are apt to get enamoured of their subject, and to dwell too long on it: every person cannot find time to read a longer work on any subject, and yet it may be well for them to know something on almost every subject; those, therefore, who abridge voluminous works judiciously, render service to the community. But there seems, if I may venture the remark, to be a mistake in the *use* of abridgments. They are put systematically into the hands of *youth*, who have, or ought to have, leisure for the works at large; while abridgments seem more immediately calculated for persons in more advanced life, who wish to recall something they had forgotten; who want to restore old ideas rather than acquire new ones; or they are useful for persons immersed in the business of the world; who have little leisure for voluminous reading: they are excellent to refresh the mind, but not competent to form it; they serve to bring back what had been formerly known, but do not supply a fund of knowledge.

Perhaps there is some analogy between the mental and bodily conformation of women. The instructor therefore should imitate the physician. If the latter prescribe bracing medicines for a body of which delicacy is the disease, the former would do well to prohibit relaxing reading for a mind which is already of too soft a texture, and s ould strengthen its feeble tone by invigorating reading.

By softness, I cannot be supposed to mean imbecility of understanding, but natural softness of heart, and pliancy of temper, together with that indolence of spirit which is fostered by indulging in seducing books, and in the general habits of fashionable life.

I mean not here to recommend books which are immediately religious, but such as exercise the reasoning faculties, teach the mind to get acquainted with its own nature, and to stir up its own powers. Let not a timid young lady start if I should venture to recommend to her, after a proper course of preparatory reading, to swallow and digest such strong meat as Watts's or Duncan's little book of Logic, some part of Mr. Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, and bishop Butler's Analogy. Where there is leisure, and capacity, and an able friend to comment and to counsel, works of this nature might be profitably substituted in the place of so much English sentiment, French philosophy, Italian love-songs, and fantastic German imagery and magic wonders.—While such enervating or absurd books sadly disqualify the reader for solid pursuit or vigorous thinking, the studies here recommended would act upon the constitution of the mind as a kind of alterative, and, if I may be allowed the expression, would help to brace the intellectual stamina.

This suggestion, is, however, by no means intended to exclude works of taste and imagination, which must always make the ornamental part, and of course a very considerable part, of female studies. It is only intimated, that they should not form them entirely and exclusively. For what is called dry, tough reading, independent of the knowledge it conveys, is useful as an habit, and wholesome as an exercise. Serious study serves to harden the mind for more trying conflicts; it lifts the reader from sensation to intellect; it abstracts her from the world and its vanities; it fixes a wandering spirit, and fortifies a weak one; it divorces her from matter; it corrects the spirit of trifling which she naturally contracts from the frivolous turn of female conversation and the petty nature of female employments; it concentrates her attention, assists her in a habit of excluding trivial thoughts, and thus even helps to qualify her for religious pursuits.—Yes, I repeat it, there is to woman a Christian use to be made of sober studies; while books of an opposite cast, however unexceptionable they may be sometimes found in point of expression, however free from evil in its more gross and palpable shapes, yet from their very nature and constitution they excite a spirit of relaxation, by exhibiting scenes and suggesting ideas which soften the mind and set the fancy at work; they take off wholesome restraints, diminish sober-mindedness, impair the general powers of resistance, and at best feed habits of improper indulgence, and nourish a vain and visionary indolence, which lays the mind open to error and the heart to seduction.

Women are little accustomed to close reasoning on any subject; still less do they inure their minds to consider particular parts of a subject; they are not habituated to turn a truth round, and view it in all its varied aspects and positions, and this perhaps is one cause (as will be observed in another place*) of the too great confidence they are disposed to place in their own opinions. Though their imagination is already too lively, and their judgment naturally incorrect; in educating them we go on to stimulate the imagination, while we neglect the regulation of the judgment. They already want ballast, and we make their education consist in continually crowding more sail than they can carry. Their intellectual powers being so little strengthened by exercise, makes every petty business appear

* See Chapter on Conversations.

a hardship to them: whereas serious study would be useful, were it only that it leads the mind to the habit of conquering difficulties. But it is peculiarly hard to turn at once from the indolent repose of light reading, from the concerns of mere animal life, the objects of sense, or the frivolousness of female chit chat; it is peculiarly hard, I say, to a mind so softened, to rescue itself from the dominion of self-indulgence, to resume its powers, to call home its scattered strength, to shut out every foreign intrusion, to force back a spring so unnaturally bent, and to devote itself to religious reading, to active business, to sober reflection, to self-examination. Whereas to an intellect accustomed to think at all, the difficulty of thinking seriously is obviously lessened.

Far be it from me to desire to make scholastic ladies or female dialecticians; but there is little fear that the kind of books here recommended, if thoroughly studied, and not superficially skimmed, will make them pedants or induce conceit; for by showing them the possible powers of the human mind, you will bring them to see the littleness of their own; and surely to get acquainted with the mind, to regulate, to inform it; to show it its own ignorance and its own nature, does not seem the way to puff it up.—But let her who is disposed to be elated with her literary acquisitions, check the rising vanity by calling to mind the just remark of Swift, 'that after all her boasted acquirements, a woman will, generally speaking, be found to possess less of what is called learning than a common school-boy.'

Neither is there any fear that this sort of reading will convert ladies into authors.—The direct contrary effect will be likely to be produced by the perusal of writers who throw the generality of readers at such an unapproachable distance as to check presumption, instead of exciting it. Who are those ever multiplying authors that with unparalleled fecundity are overstocking the world with their quick succeeding progeny? They are NOVEL-WRITERS; the easiness of whose productions is at once the cause of their own fruitfulness, and of the almost infinitely numerous race of imitators to whom they give birth. Such is the frightful facility of this species of composition, that every raw girl, while she reads, is tempted to fancy that she can also write. And as Alexander, on perusing the Iliad, found by congenial sympathy the image of Achilles stamped on his own ardent soul, and felt himself the hero he was studying; and as Corregio, on first beholding a picture which exhibited the perfection of the graphic art, prophetically felt all his own future greatness, and cried out in rapture, 'And I too am a painter!' so a thorough-paced novel-reading miss, at the close of every tissue of hackneyed adventures, feels within herself the stirring impulse of corresponding genius, and triumphantly exclaims, 'And I too am an author!' The glutted imagination soon overflows with the redundance of cheap sentiment and plentiful incident, and by a sort of arithmetical proportion, is enabled by the perusal of any three novels, to produce a fourth; till every fresh production, like the prolific progeny of Banquo, is followed by—

Another, and another, and another!

Is a lady, however destitute of talents, education, or knowledge of the world, whose studies have been completed by a circulating library, in any distress of mind? the writing a novel suggests itself as the best soother of her sorrows! Does she labour under any depression of circumstances? writing a novel occurs, as the readiest receipt for mending them! And she solaces her imagination with the conviction that the subscription which has been extorted by her importunity, or given to her necessities, has been offered as an homage to her genius. And this confidence instantly levies a fresh contribution for a succeeding work. Capacity and cultivation are so little taken into the account, that writing a book seems to be now considered as the only sure resource which the idle and the illiterate have always in their power.

May the author be indulged in a short digression while she remarks, though rather out of its place, that the corruption occasioned by these books has spread so wide, and descended so low, as to have become one of the most universal, as well as most pernicious sources of corruption among us. Not only among milliners, mantua-makers, and other trades where numbers work together, the labour of one girl is frequently sacrificed, that she may be spared to read those mischievous books to the others; but she has been assured by clergymen who have witnessed the fact, that they are procured and greedily read in the wards of our hospitals! an awful hint, that those who teach the poor to read, should not only take care to furnish them with principles which will lead them to abhor corrupt books, but that they should also furnish them with such books as shall strengthen and confirm their principles.* And let every Christian remember, that there is no other way of entering truly into the spirit of that divine prayer, which petitions that the name of God may be 'hallowed,' that his 'kingdom (of grace) may come,' and that 'his will may be done on earth as it is in heaven,' that by each individual contributing according to his measure to accomplish the work for which he prays; for to pray that these

* The above facts furnish no argument on the side of those who would keep the poor in ignorance. Those who cannot *read* can *hear*, and are likely to hear to worse purpose than those who have been better taught. And that ignorance furnishes no security for integrity either in morals or politics, the late revolts in more than one country, remarkable for the ignorance of the poor fully illustrate It is earnestly hoped that the above facts may tend to impress ladies with the importance of superintending the instruction of the poor, and of making it an indispensable part of their charity to give them moral and religious books.

The late celebrated Henry Fielding (a man not likely to be suspected of over-strictness) assured a particular friend of the author, that during his long administration of justice in Bow-street, only six Scotchmen were brought before him The remark did not proceed from any national partiality in the magistrate, but was produced by him in proof of the effect of a sober and religious education among the lower ranks, on their morals and conduct.

See farther the sentiments of a still more celebrated cotemporary on the duty of instructing the poor —'*We have been taught that the circumstance of the Gospels being preached to the poor was one of the surest tests of its mission. We think, therefore, that those do not believe it who do not take care it should be preached to the poor.*—*Burke on the French Revolution.*

great objects may be promoted, without contributing to their promotion by our exertions, our money, and our influence, is a palpable inconsistency.

CHAP. IX.

On the religious and moral use of history and geography.

WHILE every sort of useful knowledge should be carefully imparted to young persons, it should be imparted not merely for its own sake, but also for the sake of its subserviency to higher things. All human learning should be taught, not as an end, but as means; and in this view even a lesson of history or geography may be converted into a lesson of religion. In the study of history, the instructor will accustom the pupil not merely to store her memory with facts and anecdotes, and to ascertain dates and epochs: but she will accustom her also to trace effects to their causes, to examine the secret springs of action, and accurately to observe the operations of the passions. It is only meant to notice here some few of the moral benefits which may be derived from judicious perusal of history; and from among other points of instruction, I select the following:*

The study of history may serve to give a clearer insight into the corruption of human nature:

It may help to show the *plan* of Providence in the direction of events, and in the use of unworthy instruments:

It may assist in the *vindication* of Providence, in the common failure of virtue, and the frequent success of vice:

It may lead to a distrust of our own judgment:

It may contribute to our improvement in self-knowledge.

But to prove to the pupil the important doctrine of human corruption from the study of history, will require a truly Christian commentator in the friend with whom the work is perused. For, from the low standard of right established by the generality of historians, who erect so many persons into good characters who fall short of the true idea of Christian virtue, the unassisted reader will be liable to form very imperfect views of what is real goodness; and will conclude, as his author sometimes does, that the true idea of human nature is to be taken from the medium between his best and his worst characters; without acquiring a just notion of that prevalence of evil; which, in spite of those few brighter luminaries that here and there just serve to gild the gloom of history, tends abundantly to establish the doctrine. It will indeed be continually establishing itself by those who, in perusing the history of mankind, carefully mark the rise and progress of sin, from the first timid irruption of an evil thought, to the fearless accomplishment of the abhorred crime in which that thought has ended: from the indignant question, 'Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?'* to the perpetration of that very enormity of which the self-acquitting delinquent could not endure the slightest suggestion.

In this connexion may it not be observed, that young persons should be put on their guard against a too implicit belief in the flattering accounts which many voyage writers are fond of exhibiting of the virtue, amiableness, and benignity, of some of the countries newly discovered by our circumnavigators; that they should learn to suspect the superior goodness ascribed to the Hindoos, and particularly the account of the inhabitants of the Pelew Islands? These last indeed have been represented as having almost escaped the universal taint of our common nature, and would seem by their purity to have sprung from another ancestor than Adam.

We cannot forbear suspecting that these pleasing, but somewhat overcharged portraits of man in his natural state, are drawn with the invidious design, by counteracting the doctrine of human corruption, to degrade the value and even destroy the necessity of the Christian sacrifice; by insinuating that uncultivated man is so disposed to rectitude as to supersede the occasion for that redemption which is professedly designed for sinners. That in countries professing Christianity, very many are not Christians will be too readily granted. Yet to say nothing of the vast superiority of goodness in the lives of those who are really governed by Christianity, is there not something even in her reflex light which guides to greater purity many of those who do not profess to walk by it; I doubt much, if numbers of the unbelievers of a Christian country, from the sounder views and better habits derived incidentally and collaterally, as it were from the influence of a Gospel, the truth of which however they do not acknowledge, would not start at many of the actions which these *heathen perfectionists* daily commit without hesitation.

The religious reader of general history will observe the controlling hand of Providence in the direction of events; in turning the most unworthy actions and instruments to the accomplishment of his own purposes. She will mark infinite Wisdom directing what appears to be casual occurrences, to the completion of his own plan. She will point out how causes seemingly the most unconnected, events seemingly the most unpromising, circumstances seemingly the most incongruous, are all working together for some final good. She will mark how national

* It were to be wished that more historians resembled the excellent Rollin in the religious and moral turn given to his writings of this kind.—But here may I be permitted to observe incidentally (for it is not immediately analogous to my subject) that there is one disadvantage which attends the common practice of setting young ladies to read ancient history and geography in French or Italian, who have not been previously well grounded in the pronunciation of classical names of persons and places in our own language The foreign termination of Greek and Roman names are often very different from the English, and where they are first acquired are frequently retained and adopted in their stead, so as to give an illiterate appearance to the conversation of some women who are not really ignorant. And this defective pronunciation is the more to be guarded against in the education of ladies who are not taught *quantity* as boys are.

* 2 Kings, viii. 13.

as well as individual crimes are often overruled to some hidden purpose far different from the intention of the actors: how Omnipotence can, and often does, bring about the best purposes by the worst instruments: how the bloody and unjust conqueror is but 'the rod of his wrath,' to punish or to purify his offending children: how 'the fury of the oppressor,' and the sufferings of the oppressed, will one day, when the whole scheme shall be unfolded, vindicate his righteous dealings. She will explain to the less enlightened reader, how infinite Wisdom often mocks the insignificance of human greatness, and the shallowness of human ability, by setting aside instruments the most powerful and promising, while He works by agents comparatively contemptible. But she will carefully guard this doctrine of Divine Providence, thus working out his own purposes through the sins of his creatures, and by the instrumentality of the wicked, by calling to mind, while the offender is but a tool in the hands of the great Artificer, 'the wo denounced against him by whom the offence cometh! She will explain how those mutations and revolutions in states which appear to us so unaccountable, and how those operations of Providence which seem to us so entangled and complicated, all move harmoniously and in perfect order: that there is not an event but has its commission; not a misfortune which breaks its allotted rank; not a trial which moves out of its appointed track. While calamities and crimes seem to fly in casual confusion, all is commanded or permitted; all is under the control of a wisdom which cannot err, of a goodness which cannot do wrong.

To explain my meaning by a few instances. When the spirit of the youthful reader rises in honest indignation at that hypocritical piety which divorced an unoffending queen to make way for the lawful crime of our eighth Henry's marriage with Ann Boleyn, and when that indignation is increased by the more open profligacy which brought about the execution of the latter; the instructor will not lose so fair an occasion for unfolding how in the councils of the Most High the crimes of the king were overruled to the happiness of the country; and how, to this inauspicious marriage, from which the heroic Elizabeth sprang, the protestant religion owed its firm stability. This view of the subject will lead the reader to justify the Providence of God without diminishing her abhorrence of the vices of the tyrant.

She will explain to her how even the conquest of ambition, after having deluged a land with blood, involved the perpetrator in guilt, and the innocent victim in ruin, may yet be made the instrument of opening to future generations the way to commerce, to civilization, to Christianity, She may remind her, as they are following Cæsar in his invasion of Britain, that whereas the conqueror fancied he was only gratifying his own inordinate ambition, extending the flight of the Roman Eagle, immortalizing his own name, and proving that 'this world was made for Cæsar;' he was in reality becoming the effectual though unconscious instrument of leading a land of barbarians to civilization and to science: and was in fact preparing an island of pagans to embrace the religion of Christ She will inform her, that when afterwards the victorious country of the same Cæsar had made Judea a Roman province, and the Jews had become its tributaries, the Romans did not know, nor did the indignant Jews suspect, that this circumstance was operating to the confirmation of an event the most important the world ever witnessed.

For when 'Augustus sent forth a decree that all the world should be taxed;' he vainly thought he was only enlarging his own imperial power, whereas he was acting in unconscious subservience to the decree of a higher Sovereign, and was helping to ascertain by a public act the exact period of Christ's birth, and furnishing a record of his extraction from that family from which it was predicted by a long line of prophets that he should spring. Herod's atrocious murder of the innocents has added an additional circumstance for the confirmation of *our* faith; the incredulity of Thomas has strengthened our belief; nay, the treachery of Judas, and the injustice of Pilate, were the human instruments employed for the salvation of the world.

The youth that is not thoroughly armed with Christian principles, will be tempted to mutiny not only against the justice, but the very existence of a superintending Providence, in contemplating those frequent instances which occur in history of the ill success of the more virtuous cause, and the prosperity of the wicked. He will see with astonishment that it is Rome which triumphs, while Carthage, which had clearly the better cause, falls. Now and then indeed a Cicero prevails, and a Cataline is subdued: but often, it is Cæsar successful against the somewhat juster pretensions of Pompey, and against the still clearer cause of Cato. It is Octavius who triumphs, and it is over Brutus that he triumphs. It is Tiberius who is enthroned, while Germanicus falls!

Thus his faith in a righteous Providence at first view is staggered, and he is ready to say, 'Surely it is not God that governs the earth! But on a fuller consideration (and here suggestions of a Christian instructor are peculiarly wanted) there will appear great wisdom in this very confusion of vice and virtue; for it is calculated to send our thoughts forward to a world of retribution, the principle of retribution being so imperfectly established in this. It is indeed so far common for virtue to have the advantage here, in point of happiness at least, though not of glory, that the course of Providence is still calculated to prove that God is on the side of virtue; but still virtue is so often unsuccessful, that clearly the God of virtue, in order that his work may be perfect, must have in reserve a world of retribution. This confused state of things therefore is just that state which is most of all calculated to confirm the deeply considerate mind in the belief of a future state; for if all here were even or very nearly so, should we not say, 'Justice is already satisfied, and there *needs* no other world.' On the other hand, if vice always triumphed, should we not then be ready to argue in favour of vice rather than virtue, and to *wish* for no other world.

It seems so very important to ground young

persons in the belief that they will not inevitably meet in this world with reward and success according to their merit, and to habituate them to expect even the most virtuous attempts to be often, though not always disappointed, that I am in danger of tautology on this point. This fact is precisely what history teaches. The truth should be plainly told to the young reader; and the antidote to that evil, which mistaken and worldly people would expect to arise from divulging this discouraging doctrine is *faith*. The importance of faith therefore, and the necessity of it to real, unbending, and persevering virtue, is surely made plain by profane history itself. For the same thing which happens to states and kings, happens to private life and to individuals. Thus there is scarcely a page, even of pagan history, which may not be made instrumental to the establishing of the truth of revelation; and it is only by such a guarded mode of instruction that some of the evils attending on the study of ancient literature can be obviated.

Distrust and diffidence in our own judgment seems to be also an important instruction to be learnt from history. How contrary to all expectation do the events therein recorded commonly turn out! How continually is the most sagacious conjecture of human penetration baffled! and yet we proceed to foretel this consequence, and to predict that event from the appearances of things under our own observation, with the same arrogant certainty as if we had never been warned by the monitory annals of successive ages.

There is scarcely one great event in history which does not in the issue, produce effects upon which human foresight could never have calculated. The success of Augustus against his country produced peace in many distant provinces, who thus ceased to be harassed and tormented by this oppressive republic. Could this effect have been foreseen, it might have sobered the despair of Cato, and checked the vehemence of Brutus. In politics, in short in every thing except in morals and religion, all is to a considerable degree uncertain.—This reasoning is not meant to show that Cato ought not to have *fought*, but that he ought not to have *desponded* even after the last battle; and certainly, even upon his own principles, ought not to have killed himself. It would be departing too much from my object to apply this argument, however obvious the application, against those who were driven to unreasonable distrust and despair by the late successes of a neighbouring nation.

But all knowledge will be comparatively of little value, if we neglect self-knowledge; and of self-knowledge history and biography may be made successful vehicles. It will be to little purpose that our pupils become accurate critics on the characters of others, while they remain ignorant of themselves; for while to those who exercise a habit of self-application a book of profane history may be made an instrument of improvement in this difficult science; so without such an habit the Bible itself may, in this view, be read with little profit.

It will be to no purpose that the reader weeps over the fortitude of the Christian hero, or the constancy of the martyr, if she do not bear in mind that she herself is called to endure her own common trials with something of the same temper: if she do not bear in mind that, to controul irregular humours, and to submit to the daily vexations of life, will require, though in a lower degree, the exertion of the same principle, and supplication for the aid of the same spirit which sustained the Christian hero in the trying conflicts of life; or the martyr in his agony at the stake.

May I be permitted to suggest a few instances, by way of specimen, how both sacred and common history may tend to promote self-knowledge? And let me again remind the warm admirer of suffering piety under *extraordinary trials*, that if she now fail in the petty occasions to which she is actually called out, she would not be likely to have stood in those more trying occasions which excite her admiration.

While she is applauding the self-denying saint who renounced his ease, or chose to embrace death, rather than violate his duty, let her ask herself if she has never refused to submit to the paltry inconvenience of giving up her company, or even altering her dinner-hour on a Sunday, though by this trifling sacrifice her family might have been enabled to attend the public worship in the afternoon.

While she reads with horror that Belshazzar was rioting with his thousand nobles at the very moment when the Persian army was bursting through the brazen gates of Babylon; is she very sure that she herself, in an almost equally imminent moment of public danger, has not been nightly indulging in every species of dissipation?

When she is deploring the inconsistency of the human heart, while she contrasts in Mark Anthony his bravery and contempt of ease at one period, with his licentious indulgences at another; or while she laments over the intrepid soul of Cæsar, whom she had been following in his painful marches, or admiring in his contempt of death, now dissolved in dissolute pleasures with the ensnaring queen of Egypt: let her examine whether she herself has never, though in a much lower degree, evinced something of the same inconsistency? whether she who lives perhaps an orderly, sober, and reasonable life during her summer residence in the country, does not plunge with little scruple in the winter into all the most extravagant pleasures of the capital? whether she never carries about with her an accommodating kind of religion, which can be made to bend to places and seasons, to climates and customs, to times and circumstances; which takes its tincture from the fashion without, and not its habits from the principle within; which is decent with the pious, sober with the orderly, and loose with the licentious?

While she is admiring the generosity of Alexander in giving away kingdoms and provinces, let her, in order to ascertain whether she could imitate this magnanimity, take heed if she herself is daily seizing all the little occasions of doing good, which every day presents to the affluent? *Her* call is not to sacrifice a province; but does she sacrifice an opera ticket? She who

is not doing all the good she can under her present circumstances, would not do all she foresees she should, in imaginary ones, were her power enlarged to the extent of her wishes.

While she is inveighing with patriotic indignation, that in a neighbouring metropolis, thirty theatres were open every night in time of war and public calamity, is she very clear that in a metropolis which contains only three, she was not almost constantly at one of them in time of war and public calamity also? For though in a national view it may make a wide difference whether there be in the capital three theatres or thirty, yet, as the same person can only go to one of them at once, it makes but little difference as to the quantum of dissipation in the individual. She who rejoices at successful virtue in a history, or at the prosperity of a person whose interests do not interfere with her own, may exercise her self-knowledge by examining whether she rejoices equally at the happiness of every one about her: and let her remember she does not rejoice at it in the true sense, if she does not labour to promote it. She who glows with rapture at a virtuous character in history, should ask her own heart, whether she is equally ready to do justice to the fine qualities of her acquaintance, though she may not particularly love them; and whether she takes unfeigned pleasure in the superior talents, virtues, fame and fortune of those whom she professes to love, though she is eclipsed by them?

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In like manner, in the study of geography and natural history, the attention should be habitually turned to the goodness of Providence, who commonly adapts the various productions of climates to the peculiar wants of the respective inhabitants. To illustrate my meaning by one or two instances out of a thousand. The reader may be led to admire the considerate goodness of Providence in having caused the spiry fir, whose slender foliage does not obstruct the beams of the sun, to grow in the dreary regions of the north, whose shivering inhabitants could spare none of its scanty rays; while in the torrid zone, the palm-tree, the plantain, and the banana, spread their umbrella leaves to break the almost intolerable fervor of a vertical sun. How the camel, who is the sole carrier of all the merchandise of Turkey, Persia, Egypt, Arabia, and Barbary, who is obliged to transport his incredible burthens through countries in which pasture is so rare, can subsist twenty-four hours without food, and can travel loaded, many days without water, through dry and dusty deserts, which supply none; and all this, not from the habit, but from the conformation of the animal: for naturalists make this conformity of powers to climates a rule of judgment in ascertaining the native countries of animals, and always determine it to be that to which their powers and properties are most appropriate.

Thus the writers of natural history are perhaps unintentionally magnifying the operations of Providence, when they insist that animals do not modify and give way to the influence of other climates; but here they too commonly stop; neglecting, or perhaps refusing, to ascribe to infinite goodness this wise and merciful accommodation. And here the pious instructor will come in, in aid of their deficiency: for philosophers too seldom trace up causes, and wonders, and blessings to their Author. And it is peculiarly to be regretted that a late justly celebrated French naturalist, who, though not famous for his accuracy, possessed such diversified powers of description that he had the talent of making the driest subjects interesting; together with such liveliness of delineation, that his characters of animals are drawn with a spirit and variety rather to be looked for in an historian of men than of beasts: it is to be regretted, I say that this writer, with all his excellencies, is absolutely inadmissible into the library of a young lady, both on account of his immodesty and his impiety; and if in wishing to exclude him, it may be thought wrong to have given him so much commendation, it is only meant to show that the author is not led to reprobate his principles from insensibility to his talents. The remark is rather made to put the reader on remembering that no brilliancy of genius, no diversity of attainments, should ever be allowed as a commutation for defective principles and corrupt ideas.*

CHAP. X.

On the use of definitions, and the moral benefits of accuracy in language.

Persons having been accustomed from their cradles to learn words before they knew the ideas for which they stand, usually continue to do so all their lives, never taking the pains to settle in their minds, the determined ideas which belong to them. This want of a precise signification of their words, when they come to reason, *especially in moral matters*, is the cause of very obscure and uncertain notions. They use these undetermined words confidently, without much troubling their heads about a certain fixed meaning, whereby, besides the ease of it, they obtain this advantage, that as in such discourse they are seldom in the right, so they are seldom to be convinced that they are in the wrong, it being just the same to go about to draw those persons out of their mistakes, who have no settled notions, as to dispossess a vagrant of his habitation who has no settled abode.—The chief end of language being to be understood, words serve not for that end when they do not excite in the hearer the same idea which they stand for in the mind of the speaker.'†

I have chosen to shelter myself under the broad sanction of the great author here quoted, with a view to apply this rule in philology to a moral purpose; for it applies to the veracity of conversation as much as to its correctness; and as strongly recommends unequivocal and simple truth, as accurate and just expression. Scarcely any one perhaps has an adequate conception

* Goldsmith's History of Animated Nature has many references to a Divine Author. It is to be wished that some judicious person would publish a new edition of this work, purified from the indelicate and offensive parts.

† Locke.

how much clear and correct expression favours the elucidation of truth; and the side of truth is obviously the side of morals; it is in fact one and the same cause; and it is of course the same cause with that of true religion also.

It is therefore no worthless part of education, even in a religious view, to study the precise meaning of words, and the appropriate signification of language. To this end I know no better method than to accustom young persons very early to a habit of *defining* common words and things; for, as definition seems to lie at the root of correctness, to be accustomed to define English words in English, would improve the understanding more than barely to know what these words are called in French, Italian, or Latin. Or rather, one use of learning other languages is, because definition is often involved in etymology; that is, since many English words take their derivation from foreign or ancient languages, they cannot be so accurately understood without some knowledge of those languages: but precision of any kind, either moral or philological, too seldom finds its way into the education of women.

It is perhaps going out of my province to observe, that it might be well if young *men* also before they entered on the world, were to be furnished with correct definitions of certain words, the use of which is become rather ambiguous; or rather they should be instructed in the *double sense* of modern phraseology. For instance; they should be provided with a good definition of the word *honour* in the fashionable sense, showing what vices it includes, and what virtues it does not include; the term *good company*, which even the courtly Petronius of our days has defined as sometimes including not a few immoral and disreputable characters: *religion*, which in the various senses assigned it by the world, sometimes means superstition, sometimes fanaticism, and sometimes a mere disposition to attend on any kind of form of worship: the word *goodness*, which is made to mean every thing that is not notoriously bad; and sometimes even that too, if what is notoriously bad be accompanied by good humour, pleasing manners, and a little alms-giving. By these means they would go forth armed against many of the false opinions which, through the abuse or ambiguous meaning of words, pass so current in the world.

But to return to the youthful part of that sex which is the more immediate object of this little work. With correct definition they should also be taught to study the shades of words, and this not merely with a view to accuracy of expression, though even that involves both sense and elegance, but with a view to moral truth.

It may be thought ridiculous to assert that morals have any connexion with the purity of language, or that the precision of truth may be violated through defect of critical exactness in the three degrees of comparison: yet how frequently do we hear from the dealers in superlatives, of 'most admirable, superexcellent, and quite perfect' people, who, to plain persons, not bred in the school of exaggeration, would appear mere common characters, not rising above the level of mediocrity! By this negligence in the just application of words, we shall be as much misled by these trope and figure ladies, when they degrade as when they panegyrize; for to a plain and sober judgment, a tradesman may not be 'the most good-for-nothing fellow that ever existed,' merely because it was impossible for him to execute in an hour, an order which required a week; a lady may not be 'the most hideous fright the world ever saw,' though the make of her gown may have been obsolete for a month; nor may one's young friend's father be a 'monster of cruelty,' though he may be a quiet gentleman who does not choose to live at watering-places, but likes to have his daughter stay at home with him in the country.

Of all the parts of speech, the interjection is the most abundantly in use with the hyperbolical fair ones. Would it could be added that these emphatical expletives (if I may make use of a contradictory term,) were not sometimes tinctured with profaneness! Though I am persuaded that idle habit is often more at the bottom of this deep offence than intended impiety, yet there is scarcely any error of youthful talk which merits severer castigation. And an habit of exclamation should be rejected by polished people as vulgar, even if it were not abhorred as profane.

The habit of exaggerating trifles, together with the grand female failing of excessive mutual flattery, and elaborate general professions of fondness and attachment, is inconceivably cherished by the voluminous private correspondences in which some girls are indulged. In vindication of this practice it is pleaded that a facility of style, and an easy turn of expression, are acquisitions to be derived from an early interchange of sentiments by letter-writing; but even if it were so, these would be dearly purchased by the sacrifice of that truth, and sobriety of sentiment, that correctness of language, and that ingenuous simplicity of character and manners so lovely in female youth.

Next to pernicious reading, imprudent and violent friendships are the most dangerous snares to this simplicity. And boundless correspondences with different confidants, whether they live in a distant province, or, as it often happens, in the same street, are the fuel which principally feeds this dangerous flame of youthful sentiment. In those correspondences the young friends often encourage each other in the falsest notions of human life, and the most erroneous views of each other's character. Family affairs are divulged, and family faults aggravated. Vows of everlasting attachment and exclusive fondness are in a pretty just proportion bestowed on every friend alike. These epistles overflow with quotations from the most passionate of the dramatic poets; and passages wrested from their natural meaning, and pressed into the service of sentiment, are, with all the violence of misapplication, compelled to suit the case of the heroic transcriber.

But antecedent to this *epistolary period* of life they should have been accustomed to the most scrupulous exactness in whatever they relate. They should maintain the most critical accuracy in *facts*, in *dates*, in *numbering*, in *describing*, in short, in whatever pertains, either directly or indirectly, closely or remotely, to the great fun-

damental principle, *truth*. It is so very difficult for persons of great liveliness to restrain themselves within the sober limits of strict veracity, either in their assertions or narrations, especially when a little undue indulgence of fancy is apt to procure for them the praise of genius and spirit, that this restraint is one of the earliest principles which should be worked into the youthful mind.

The conversation of young females is also in danger of being overloaded with epithets. As in the warm season of youth hardly any thing is seen in the true point of vision, so hardly any thing is named in naked simplicity; and the very sensibility of the feelings is partly a cause of the extravagance of the expression. But here, as in other points, the sacred writers, particularly of the New Testament, present us with the purest models; and its natural and unlaboured style of expression is perhaps not the meanest evidence of the truth of the Gospel. There is throughout the whole narratives, no overcharged character, no elaborate description, nothing studiously emphatical, as if truth of itself were weak, and wanted to be helped out. There is little panegyric, and less invective; none but on great, and awful, and justifiable occasions. The authors record their own faults with the same honesty as if they were the faults of other men, and the faults of other men with as little amplification as if they were their own. There is perhaps no book in which adjectives are so sparingly used. A modest statement of the fact, with no colouring and little comment, with little emphasis and no varnish, is the example held out to us for correcting the exuberances of passion and of language, by that divine volume which furnishes us with the still more important rule of faith and standard of practice.* Nor is the truth lowered by any feebleness, nor is the spirit diluted, nor the impression weakened by this soberness and moderation; for with all this plainness there is so much force, with all this simplicity there is so much energy, that a few slight touches and artless strokes of Scripture characters convey a stronger outline of the person delineated, than is sometimes given by the most elaborate and finished portrait of more artificial historians.

If it be objected to this remark, that many parts of the sacred writings abound in a lofty, figurative, and even hyperbolical style; this objection applies chiefly to the writings of the Old Testament, and to the prophetical and poetical parts of that. But the metaphorical and florid style of those writings is distinct from the inaccurate and overstrained expression we have been censuring; for that only is inaccuracy which leads to a false and inadequate conception in the reader or hearer. The lofty style of the eastern, and of other heroic poetry, does not so mislead; for the metaphor is understood to be a metaphor, and the imagery is understood to be ornamental. The style of the Scriptures of the Old Testament is not, it is true, plain in opposition to figurative; nor simple in opposition to florid; but it is plain and simple in the best sense, as opposed to false principles and false taste; it raises no wrong idea; it gives an exact impression of the thing it means to convey; and its very tropes and figures, though bold, are never unnatural or affected: when it embellishes it does not mislead; even when it exaggerates, it does not misrepresent; if it be hyperbolical, it is so either in compliance with the genius of oriental language, or in compliance with contemporary customs, or because the subject is one which will be most forcibly impressed by a strong figure. The loftiness of the expression deducts nothing from the weight of the circumstance; the imagery animates the reader without misleading him; the boldest illustration, while it dilates his conception of the subject, detracts nothing from its exactness; and the divine Spirit, instead of suffering truth to be injured by the opulence of the figures, contrives to make them fresh and varied avenues to the heart and the understanding.

CHAP. XI.

On religion. The necessity and duty of early instruction shown by analogy with human learning.

It has been the fashion of our late innovators in philosophy, who have written some of the most brilliant and popular treatises on education, to decry the practice of early instilling religious knowledge into the minds of children. In vindication of this opinion it has been alleged, that it is of the utmost importance to the cause of truth, that the mind of man should be kept free from prepossessions; and in particular, that every one should be left to form such judgment on religious subjects as may seem best to his own reason in maturer years.

This sentiment has received some countenance from those better characters who have wished, on the fairest principle, to encourage free inquiry in religion; but it has been pushed to the blameable excess here censured, chiefly by the new philosophers; who, while they profess only an ingenuous zeal for truth, are in fact slily endeavouring to destroy Christianity itself, by discountenancing, under the plausible pretence of free inquiry, all attention whatever to the religious education of our youth.

It is undoubtedly our duty, while we are instilling principles into the tender mind, to take peculiar care that those principles be sound and just; that the religion we teach be the religion of the Bible, and not the inventions of human error or superstition: that the principles we infuse into others, be such as we ourselves have well scrutinized, and not the result of our credulity or bigotry; not the mere hereditary, unexamined prejudices of our own undiscerning childhood. It may also be granted, that it is the duty of every parent to inform the youth, that when his faculties shall have so unfolded themselves, as to enable him to examine for himself those principles which the parent is now instilling, it will be his duty so to examine them.

But after making these concessions, I would most seriously insist that there are certain leading and fundamental truths; that there are certain sentiments on the side of Christianity, as

well as of virtue and benevolence, in favour of which every child *ought* to be prepossessed; and may it not be also added, that to expect to keep the mind void of all prepossession, even upon any subject, appears to be altogether a vain and impracticable attempt; an attempt, the very suggestion of which argues much ignorance of human nature.

Let it be observed here, that we are not combating the infidel; that we are not producing evidences and arguments in favour of the truth of Christianity, or trying to win over the assent of the reader to that which he disputes, but that we are taking it for granted, not only that Christianity is true, but that we are addressing those who believe it to be true: an assumption which has been made throughout this work. Assuming, therefore, that there are religious principles which are true, and which ought to be communicated in the most effectual manner, the next question which arises seems to be, at what age and in what manner these ought to be inculcated; that it ought to be at an early period we have the command of Christ; who encouragingly said, in answer to those who would have repelled their approach, 'Suffer *little* children to come unto me.'

But here conceding, for the sake of argument, what yet cannot be conceded, that some good reasons *may* be brought in favour of delay; allowing that such impressions as are communicated early may not be very deep; allowing them even to become totally effaced by the subsequent corruptions of the heart and of the world; still I would illustrate the importance of early infusing religious knowledge, by an allusion drawn from the power of early habit in human learning. Put the case, for instance, of a person who was betimes initiated in the rudiments of classical studies Suppose him after quitting school to have fallen, either by a course of idleness or of vulgar pursuits, into a total neglect of study. Should this person at any future period happen to be called to some profession, which should oblige him, as we say, to rub up his Greek and Latin; his memory still retaining the unobliterated though faint traces of his early pursuits, he will be able to recover his neglected learning with less difficulty than he could now begin to learn; for he is not again obliged to set out with studying the simple elements; they come back on being pursued; they are found on being searched for; the decayed images assume shape, and strength, and colour; he has in his mind first principles to which to recur; the rules of grammar which he has allowed himself to violate, he has not however forgotten; he will recall neglected ideas, he will resume slighted habits far more easily than he could now begin to acquire new ones. I appeal to clergymen who are called to attend the dying beds of such as have been bred in gross and stupid ignorance of religion, for the justness of this comparison. Do they not find that these unhappy people have no ideas in common with them? that *they* therefore possess no intelligible medium by which to make themselves understood? that the persons to whom they are addressing themselves have no first principles to which they can be referred? that they are ignorant not only of the science, but the language of Christianity?

But at worst, whatever be the event of a pious education to the child, though in general we are encouraged from the tenor of Scripture and the course of experience to hope that the event will be favourable, and that 'when he is old he will not depart from it.' Is it nothing for the parent to have acquitted himself of this prime duty? Is it nothing to him that he has obeyed the plain command of 'training his child in the way he should go?' And will not the parent who so acquits himself, with better reason and more lively hope, supplicate the Father of mercies for the reclaiming of a prodigal, who has wandered out of that right path in which he has set him forward, than for the conversion of a neglected creature, to whose feet the Gospel had never been offered as a light? And how different will be the dying reflections even of that parent whose earnest endeavours have been unhappily defeated by the subsequent and voluntary perversion of his child, from his who will reasonably aggravate his pangs, by transferring the sins of his neglected child to the number of his own transgressions.

And to such well-intentioned but ill-judging parents as really wish their children to be hereafter pious, but erroneously withhold instruction till the more advanced period prescribed by the great master of splendid paradoxes* shall arrive· who can assure them, that while they are withholding the good seed, the great and ever vigilant enemy, who assiduously seizes hold on every opportunity which *we* slight, and cultivates every advantage which *we* neglect, may not be stocking the fallow ground with tares? Nay, who in this fluctuating state of things can be assured, even if this were not certainly to be the case, that to them the promised period ever shall arrive at all? Who shall ascertain to them that their now neglected child shall certainly live to receive the delayed instructions? Who can assure them that they themselves will live to communicate it?

It is almost needless to observe that parents who are indifferent about religion, much more those who treat it with scorn, are not likely to be anxious on this subject; it is therefore the attention of *religious* parents which is here chiefly called upon; and the more so, as there seems, on this point, an unaccountable negligence in many of these, whether it arises from indolence, false principles, or whatever other motive.

But independent of knowledge, it is something, nay, let philosophers say what they will, it is much to give youth *prepossessions* in favour of religion, to secure their *prejudices* on its side before you turn them adrift into the world; a world in which, before they can be completely armed with arguments and reasons, they will be assailed by numbers whose prepossessions and prejudices, far more than *their* arguments and reasons, attach them to the other side. Why should not the Christian youth furnish himself in the best cause with the same natural armour which the enemies of religion wear in the worst? It is certain that to set out in life with senti-

* Rousseau.

ments in favour of the religion of our country is no more an error or a weakness, than to grow up with a fondness for our country itself. If the love of our country be judged a fair principle, surely a Christian who is 'a citizen of no mean city,' may lawfully have *his* attachments too. If patriotism be an honest prejudice, Christianity is not a servile one. Nay, let us teach the youth to hug his prejudices, to glory in his prepossessions, rather than to acquire that versatile and accommodating citizenship of the world, by which he may be an infidel in Paris, a Papist at Rome, and a Mussulman at Cairo.

Let me not be supposed so to elevate politics, or so to depress religion, as to make any comparision of the value of the one with the other, when I observe, that between the true British patriot and the true Christian, there will be this common resemblance: the more deeply each of them inquires, the more will he be confirmed in his respective attachment, the one to his country, the other to his religion. I speak with reverence of the immeasurable distance; but the more the one presses on the firm arch of our constitution, and the other on that of Christianity, the stronger he will find them both. Each challenges scrutiny; each has nothing to dread but from shallow politicians and shallow philosophers; in each intimate knowledge justifies prepossession; in each investigation confirms attachment.

If we divide the human being into three component parts, the bodily, the intellectual, and the spiritual, is it not reasonable that a portion of care and attention be assigned to each in some degree adequate to its importance? Should I venture to say a *due* portion, a portion adapted to the real comparative value of each, would not that condemn in one word the whole system of modern education? The rational and intellectual part being avowedly more valuable than the bodily, while the spiritual and immortal part exceeds even the intellectual still more than that surpasses what is corporeal; is it acting according to the common rules of proportion; is it acting on the principles of distributive justice; is it acting with that good sense and right judgment with which the ordinary business of this world is usually transacted, to give the larger portion of time and care to that which is worth the least? Is it fair that what relates to the body and the organs of the body, I mean those accomplishments which address themselves to the eye and the ear, should occupy almost the whole thoughts; while the intellectual part should be robbed of its due proportion, and the spiritual part should have almost no proportion at all? Is not this preparing your children for an awful disappointment in the tremendous day when they shall be stripped of that body, of those senses and organs, which have been made almost the sole objects of their attentions, and shall feel themselves left in possession of nothing but that spiritual part which in education was scarcely taken into the account of their existence?

Surely it should be thought a reasonable compromise (and I am in fact undervaluing the object for the importance of which I plead) to suggest, that at least two-thirds of that time which is now usurped by externals should be restored to the rightful owners, the understanding and the heart; and that the acquisition of religious knowledge in early youth should at least be *no less* an object of sedulous attention than the cultivation of human learning or of outward embellishments. It is also not unreasonable to suggest, that we should in Christianity, as in arts, sciences, or languages, begin with the beginning, set out with the simple elements, and thus 'go on unto perfection.'

Why in teaching to draw do you begin with straight lines and curves, till by gentle steps the knowledge of outline and proportion be obtained, and your picture be completed; never losing sight, however, of the elementary lines and curves? Why in music do you set out with the simple notes, and pursue the acquisition through all its progress, still in every stage recurring to the notes? Why in the science of numbers do you invent the simplest methods of conveying just ideas of computation, still referring to the tables which involve the fundamental rules? Why in the science of quantity do men introduce the pupil at first to the plainest diagrams, and clear up one difficulty before they allow another to appear? Why in teaching languages to the youth do you sedulously infuse into his mind the rudiments of your syntax? Why in parsing is he led to refer every word to its part of speech, to resolve every sentence into its elements, to reduce every term to its original, and from the first case of nouns, and the first tense of verbs, to explain their formations, changes, and dependences, till the principles of language become so grounded, that, by continually recurring to the rules, speaking and writing correctly are fixed into a habit? Why all this, but because you uniformly wish him to be grounded in each of his acquirements? Why, but because you are persuaded that a slight, and slovenly, and superficial, and irregular way of instruction will never train him to excellence in any thing?

Do young persons then become musicians, painters, linguists, and mathematicians by early study and regular labour; and shall they become Christians by accident? or rather, is not this acting on that very principle of Dogberry, at which you probably have often laughed? Is it not supposing that religion like reading and writing comes by nature? Shall all those accomplishments, 'which perish in the using,' be so assiduously, so systematically taught? Shall all those habits, which are limited to the things of this world, be so carefully formed, so persisted in, as to be interwoven with our very make, so as to become as it were a part of ourselves; and shall that knowledge which is to make us 'wise unto salvation' be picked up at random, cursorily, or perhaps not picked up at all? Shall that difficult divine science which requires 'line upon line, and precept upon precept,' here a little and there a little; that knowledge which parents, even under a darker dispensation, were required to teach their children *diligently*, and to talk of it when they sat in their house, and when they walked by the way, and when they lay down, and when they rose up,' shall this knowledge be by Christian parents

omitted or deferred, or taught slightly; or be superseded by things of comparatively little worth?

Shall the lively period of youth, the soft and impressible season when lasting habits are formed, when the seal cuts deep into the yielding wax, and the impression is more likely to be clear, and sharp, and strong, and lasting; shall this warm and favourable season be suffered to slide by, without being turned to the great purpose for which not only youth, but life and breath, and being were bestowed? Shall not that 'faith without which it is impossible to please God;' shall not that 'holiness without which no man can see the Lord;' shall not that knowledge which is the foundation of faith and practice; shall not that charity without which all knowledge is 'sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal,' be impressed, be inculcated, be enforced, as early, as constantly, as fundamentally, with the same earnest pushing on to continual progress, with the same constant reference to first principles, as are used in the case of those arts which merely adorn human life? Shall we not seize the happy period when the memory is strong, the mind and all its powers vigorous and active, the imagination busy and all alive; the heart flexible, the temper ductile, the conscience tender, curiosity awake, fear powerful, hope eager, love ardent; shall we not seize this period for inculcating that knowledge, and impressing those principles which are to form the character, and fix the destination for eternity?

I would now address myself to another and a still more dilatory class, who are for procrastinating all concern about religion till they are driven to it by actual distress, and who do not think of praying till they are perishing like the sailor who said, 'he thought it was always time enough to begin to pray when the storm began.' Of these I would ask, shall we, with an unaccountable deliberation, defer our anxiety about religion till the busy man and the dissipated woman are become so immersed in the cares of life, or so entangled in its pleasures, that they will have little heart or spirit to embrace a new principle? a principle whose precise object it will be to condemn that very life in which they have already embarked: nay, to condemn almost all that they have been doing and thinking ever since they first began to act or think? Shall we, I say, begin now? or shall we suffer those instructions, to receive which, requires all the concentrated powers of a strong and healthy mind, to be put off till the day of excruciating pain, till the period of debility and stupefaction? Shall we wait for that season, as if it were the most favourable for religious acquisitions, when the senses shall have been palled by excessive gratification, when the eye shall be tired with seeing, and the ear with hearing? Shall we, when the whole man is breaking up by disease or decay, expect that the dim apprehension will discern a new science, or the obtuse feelings delight themselves with a new pleasure? a pleasure too, not only incompatible with many of the hitherto indulged pleasures, but one which carries with it a strong intimation that those pleasures terminate in the death of the soul.

But, not to lose sight of the important analogy on which we have already dwelt so much; how preposterous would it seem to you to hear any one propose to an illiterate dying man, to set about learning even the plainest, and easiest rudiments of any new art; to study the musical notes; to conjugate a verb; to learn, not the first problem in Euclid, but even the numeration table and yet you do not think it absurd to postpone religious instruction, on principles, which, if admitted, at all, must terminate either in ignorance or in your proposing too late to a dying man to begin to learn the totally unknown scheme of Christianity. You do not think it impossible that he should be brought to listen to 'the voice of this charmer, when he can no longer listen to 'the voice of singing men and singing women.' You do not think it unreasonable that immortal beings should delay to devote their days to heaven, till they have 'no pleasure in them' themselves. You will not bring them to offer up the first fruits of their lips, and hearts, and lives, to their Maker, because you persuade yourselves that he who has called himself a 'jealous God,' may however be contented hereafter with the wretched sacrifice of decayed appetites, and the worthless leavings of almost extinguished affections.

We can scarcely believe, even with all the melancholy procrastination we see around us that there is any one, except he be a decided infidel, who does not consider religion as at least a good reversionary thing; as an object which ought always to occupy a little remote corner of his map of life; the study of which, though it is always to be postponed, is however not to be finally rejected; which, though it cannot conveniently come into his present scheme of life, it is intended somehow or other to take up before death. This awful deception, this defect in the intellectual vision, arises, partly from the bulk which the objects of time and sense acquire in our eyes by their nearness; while the invisible realities of eternity are but faintly discerned by a feeble faith, through a dim and distant medium. It arises also partly from a totally false idea of the nature of Christianity, from a fatal fancy that we can repent at any future period, and that as amendment is a thing which will always be in our power, it will be time enough to think of reforming our life, when we should think only of closing it.

But depend upon it, that a heart long hardened, I do not mean by gross vices merely, but by a fondness for the world, by an habitual and excessive indulgence in the pleasures of sense, will by no means be in a favourable state to admit the light of divine truth, or to receive the impressions of divine grace. God indeed sometimes shows us by an act of his sovereignty, that this wonderful change, the conversion of a sinner's heart, may be produced without the intervention of human means, to show that the work is His. But as this is not the way in which the Almighty usually deals with his creatures, it would be nearly as preposterous for men to act on this presumption, and sin on in hopes of a miraculous conversion, as it would be to take no means for the preservation of their lives, because Jesus Christ raised Lazarus from the dead.

CHAP. XII.

On the manner of instructing young persons in religion.—General remarks on the genius of Christianity.

I WOULD now with great deference address those respectable characters who are really concerned about the best interests of their children; those to whom Christianity is indeed an important consideration, but whose habits of life have hitherto hindered them from giving it its due degree in the scale of education.

Begin then with considering that religion is a part, and the most prominent part, in your system of instruction. Do not communicate its principles in a random, desultory way; nor scantily stint this business to only such scraps and remnants of time as may be casually picked up from the gleanings of other acquirements. 'Will you bring to God for a sacrifice that which costs you nothing?' Let the best part of the day, which with most people is the earliest part, be steadily and invariably dedicated to this work by your children, before they are tired with their other studies, while the intellect is clear, the spirit light, and the attention sharp and unfatigued.

Confine not your instructions to mere verbal rituals and dry systems, but communicate them in a way which shall interest their feelings, by lively images, and by a warm practical application of what they read to their own hearts and circumstances. If you do not study the great but too much slighted art of fixing, of commanding, of chaining the attention, you may throw away much time and labour, with little other effect than that of disgusting your pupils and wearying yourself. There seems to be no good reason that while every other thing is to be made amusing, religion alone must be dry and uninviting. Do not fancy that a thing is good merely because it is dull. Why should not the most entertaining powers of the human mind be supremely consecrated to that subject which is most worthy of their full exercise? The misfortune is, that religious learning is too often rather considered as an act of the memory than of the heart and affections; as a dry duty, rather than a lively pleasure. The manner in which it is taught differs as much from their other learning as punishment from recreation. Children are turned over to the dull work of getting by rote as a task that which they should get from example, from animated conversation, from lively discussion, in which the pupil should learn to bear a part, instead of being merely a passive hearer. Teach them rather, as their blessed Saviour taught, by interesting parables, which, while they corrected the heart, left some exercise for the ingenuity in the solution, and for the feelings in their application. Teach, as HE taught, by seizing on surrounding objects, passing events, local circumstances, peculiar characters, apt illusions, just analogy, appropriate illustration. Call in all creation, animate and inanimate, to your aid, and accustom your young audience to

> Find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in every thing

Even when the nature of your subject makes it necessary for you to be more plain and didactic, do not fail frequently to enliven these less engaging parts of your discourse with some incidental imagery which will captivate the fancy; with some affecting story with which it shall be associated in the memory. Relieve what would otherwise be too dry and preceptive, with some striking exemplification in point, some touching instance to be imitated, some awful warning to be avoided; something which shall illustrate your instruction, which shall realize your position, which shall embody your idea, and give shape and form, colour and life, to your precept. Endeavour unremittingly to connect the reader with the subject by making her feel that what you teach is neither an abstract truth, nor a thing of mere general information, but that it is a business in which *she herself* is individually and immediately concerned; in which not only her eternal salvation but her *present* happiness is involved. Do, according to your measure of ability, what the Holy Spirit which indited the Scriptures has done, always take the sensibility of the learner into your account of the faculties which are to be worked upon. 'For the doctrines of the Bible,' as the profound and enlightened Bacon observes, 'are not proposed to us in a naked logic form, but arrayed in the most beautiful and striking colours which creation affords.' By those affecting illustrations used by Him 'who knew what was in man,' and therefore best knew how to address him, it was, that the unlettered audiences of Christ and his apostles were enabled both to comprehend and to relish doctrines, which would not readily have made their way to their understandings, had they not first touched their hearts; and which would have found access to neither the one nor the other, had they been delivered in dry scholastic disquisitions. Now, those audiences not being learned, may be supposed to have been nearly in the state of children, as to their receptive faculties, and to have required nearly the same sort of instruction; that is, they were more capable of being moved with what was simple and touching, and lively, than what was elaborate, abstruse, and unaffecting. Heaven and earth were made to furnish their contributions, when man was to be taught that science which was to make him wise unto salvation. Something which might enforce or illustrate was drawn from every element. The appearances of the sky, the storms of the ocean, the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, the fruits of the earth, the seed and the harvest, the labours of the husbandmen, the traffic of the merchant, the season of the year! all were laid hold of in turn. And the most important moral instruction, or religious truth, was deduced from some recent occurrence, some natural appearance, some ordinary fact.

If that be the purest eloquence which most persuades and which comes home to the heart with the fullest evidence and the most irresistible force, then no eloquence is so powerful as that of Scripture; and an intelligent Christian teacher will be admonished by the mode of Scripture itself, how to communicate its truths with life and spirit; 'while he is musing, the fire burns;' that fire which will preserve him

from an insipid and freezing mode of instruction. He will moreover, as was said above, always carefully keep up a quick sense of the personal interest the pupil has in every religious instruction which is impressed upon him. He will teach as Paul prayed, 'with the spirit, and with the understanding also;' and in imitating this great model, he will necessarily avoid the opposite faults of two different sorts of instructors; for while some of our divines of the higher class have been too apt to preach as if mankind had only intellect, and the lower and more popular sort as if they had only passions, let him borrow what is good from both, and address his pupils as beings compounded of both understanding and affections.*

Fancy not that the Bible is too difficult and intricate to be presented in its own naked form, and that it puzzles and bewilders the youthful understanding. In all needful and indispensable points of knowledge, the darkness of Scripture, as a great Christian philosopher† has observed, 'is but a partial darkness, like that of Egypt, which benighted only the enemies of God, while it left his children in clear day.' It is not pretended that the Bible will *find* in the young reader clear views of God and of Christ, of the soul and eternity, but that it will *give* them. And if it be really the appropriate character of Scripture, as it tells us itself that it is, 'to enlighten the eyes of the *blind*,' and 'to make wise the *simple*,' then it is as well calculated for the youthful and uninformed as for any other class; and as it was never expected that the greater part of Christians should be learned, so is learning, though of inestimable value in a *teacher* of theology, no *essential* qualification for a common Christian, for which reason Scripture truths are expressed with that clear and simple evidence adapted to the kind of assent which they require; an assent materially different from that sort of demonstration which a mathematical theorem demands. He who could bring an unprejudiced heart and an unperverted will, would bring to the Scriptures the best qualification for understanding and receiving them. And though they contain things which the pupil cannot comprehend (as what ancient poet, historian, or orator does not) the teacher may address to him the words which Christ addressed to Peter, 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.'

Histories of the Bible, and commentaries on the Bible, for the use of children, though valuable in their way, should never be used as substitutes for the Bible itself. For historical or geographical information, for calling the attention to events and characters, they are very useful. But Scripture truths are best conveyed in its own sublime and simple phraseology; its doctrines are best understood in its own appropriate language; its precepts are best retained in their own simple form. Paraphrases, in professing to explain, often dilute; while the terseness and brevity of Scripture composition fills the mind, touches the heart, and fastens on the memory. While I would cause them to 'read, the commentary for the improvement of the understanding, they should mark, learn, and inwardly digest' the Bible for the comfort and edification of the heart.

Young people who have been taught religion in a formal and superficial way, who have had all its drudgeries and none of its pleasures, will probably have acquired so little relish for it, as to consider the continued prosecution of their religious studies as a badge of their tutelage, as a mark that they are still under subjection; and will look forward with impatience to the hour of their emancipation from the lectures on christianity, as the era of their promised liberty; the epocha of independence. They will long for the period when its lessons shall cease to be delivered; will conclude that, having once attained such an age, and arrived at the required proficiency, the object will be accomplished, and the labour at an end. But let not *your* children 'so learn Christ.' Apprise them that no specific day will ever arise, on which they shall say, I *have* attained; but inform them, that every acquisition must be followed up; knowledge must be increased; prejudices subdued; good habits rooted; evil ones eradicated; amiable dispositions strengthened; right principles confirmed; till going on from light to light, and from strength to strength, they come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'

But though serious instruction will not only be uninteresting but irksome, if conveyed to youth in a cold didactic way; yet if their affections be suitably engaged, while their understandings are kept in exercise, their hearts so far from necessarily revolting, as some insist, will often receive the most solemn truths with alacrity. It is, as we have repeated, the manner which revolts them, and not the thing. Nor will they, as some assert, necessarily dislike the teacher, because the truths taught are of the most awful and solemn kind. It has happened to the writer to be a frequent witness of the gratitude and affection expressed by young persons to those who had sedulously and seriously instructed them in religious knowledge; an affection as lively, a gratitude as warm, as could have been excited by any indulgence to their persons, or any gratification of a worldly nature.

As it is notorious that men of wit and sprightly fancy have been the most formidable enemies to Christianity; while men, in whom those talents have been consecrated to God, have been some of her most useful champions, take particular care to press that ardent and ever-active power, the ***imagination***, into the service of religion. This bright and busy faculty will be leading its possessor into perpetual peril, and is an enemy of peculiar potency till it come to be employed in the cause of God. It is a lion, which though worldly prudence indeed may *chain* so as to prevent out

* The zeal and diligence with which the bishop of London's weekly lectures have been attended by persons of all ranks and descriptions, but more especially by that class to whom this little work is addressed, is a very promising circumstance for the age. And while we consider with pleasure the advantages peculiarly to be derived by the young from so interesting and animated an exposition of the Gospel, we are further led to rejoice at the countenance given by such high authority to the revival of that excellent but too much neglected practice of lectures.

† Mr. Boyle.

ward mischief, yet the malignity remains within; but when sanctified by Christianity, the imagination is a lion *tamed*; you have all the benefit of its strength and its activity, divested of its mischief. God never bestowed that noble but restless faculty, without intending it to be an instrument of his own glory; though it has been too often set up in rebellion against him; because, in its youthful stirrings, while all alive and full of action, it has not been seized upon to serve its rightful Sovereign, but was early enlisted with little opposition under the banners of the world, the flesh, and the devil! Religion is the only subject in which, under the guidance of a severe and sober-minded prudence, this discursive faculty can safely stretch its powers and expand its energies! But let it be remembered, that it must be a sound and genuine Christianity which can alone so chastise and regulate the imagination, as to restrain it from those errors and excesses into which a false, a mistaken, an irregular religion, has too often led its injudicious and ill-instructed professor. Some of the most fatal extremes into which a wild enthusiasm or a frightful superstition has plunged its unhappy votaries, have been owing to the want of a due direction, to the want of a strict and holy castigation of this ever-working faculty. To secure imagination, therefore, on the safe side, and, if I may change the metaphor, to put it under the direction of its true pilot, in the stormy voyage of life, is like engaging those potent elements, the wind and tide in your favour.

In your communications with young people, take care to convince them that as religion is not a business to be laid aside with the lesson, so neither is it a single branch of duty; some detached thing, which like the acquisition of an art or a language, is to be practised separately, and to have its distinct periods and modes of operation. But let them understand, that common acts, by the spirit in which they are to be performed, are to be made acts of religion. Let them perceive that Christianity may be considered as having something of that influence over the conduct, which external grace has over the manners; for as it is not the performance of some particular act which denominates any one to be graceful, grace being a spirit diffused through the whole system, which animates every sentiment, and informs every action; as she who has true personal grace has it uniformly, and is not sometimes awkward and sometimes elegant; does not sometimes lay it down and sometimes take it up; so religion is not an occasional act, but an indwelling principle, an inwrought habit, a pervading and informing spirit, from which indeed every act derives all its life, and energy, and beauty.

Give them clear views of the broad discrimination between practical religion and worldly morality; in short, between the virtues of Christians and of Pagans. Show them that no good qualities are genuine, but such as flow from the religion of Christ. Let them learn that the virtues which the better sort of people, who are yet destitute of true Christianity, inculcate and practise, resemble those virtues which have the love of God for their motive, just as counterfeit coin resembles sterling gold; they may have, it is true, certain points of resemblance with the others; they may be bright and shining; they have perhaps the image and the superscription, but they ever want the true distinguishing properties; they want sterling value, purity, and weight. They may indeed pass current in the traffic of this world, but when brought to the touchstone, they will be found full of alloy; when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, 'they will be found wanting,' they will not stand that final trial which is to separate 'the precious from the vile;' they will not abide the day 'of *his* coming who is like a refiner's fire.'

One error into which even some good people are apt to fall, is that endeavouring to deceive young minds by temporising expedients. In order to allure them to become religious, they exhibit false, or faint, or inadequate views of Christianity; and while they represent it as it really is, as a life of superior happiness and advantage, they conceal its difficulties, and like the jesuitical Chinese missionaries, extenuate, or sink, or deny, such parts of it as are least alluring to human pride. In attempting to disguise its principles, they destroy its efficacy. They deny the cross instead of making it the badge of a Christian. But besides that, the project fails with them as it did with the Jesuits; all fraud is bad in itself; and a pious fraud is a contradiction in terms, which ought to be buried in the rubbish of papal desolation.

Instead of representing to the young Christian, that it may be possible by a prudent ingenuity at once to pursue, with equal ardour and success, worldly fame and eternal glory, would it not be more honest to tell him fairly and unambiguously that there are two distinct roads between which there is a broad boundary line? that there are two contending and irreconcilable interests? that he must forsake the one if he would cleave to the other? that 'there are two masters,' both of whom it is impossible to serve? that there are two sorts of characters at eternal variance? that he must renounce the one if he is in earnest for the other? that nothing short of absolute decision can make a confirmed Christian? Point out the different sorts of promises annexed to these different sorts of characters. Confess in the language of Christ how the man of the world often obtains (and it is the natural course of human things) the recompence he sedulously seeks. 'Verily I say unto you they have their reward.' Explain the beatitudes on the other hand, and unfold what kind of specific reward is there individually promised to its concomitant virtue. Show your pupil that to that 'poverty of spirit' to which 'the kingdom of heaven' is promised, it would be inconsistent to expect that the recompence of human commendation should be also attached; that to that 'purity of heart' to which the beatific vision is annexed, it would be unreasonable to suppose you can unite the praise of licentious wits, or the admiration of a catch-club. These will be bestowed on their appropriate and corresponding merit. Do not enlist them under false colours, disappointment will produce a desertion. Different sorts of rewards are attached to different sorts of services; and while you truly assert that

Religion's ways are 'ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace,' take care that you do not lead them to depend too exclusively on worldly happiness and earthly peace, for these make no part of the covenant; they may be, and they often are, superadded, but they were never stipulated in the contract.

But if, in order to attract the young to a religious course, you disingenuously conceal its difficulties, while you are justly enlarging upon its pleasures, you will tempt them to distrust the truth of Scripture itself.—For what will they think, not only of a few detached texts, but of the general cast and colour of the Gospel when contrasted with your representation of it? When you are describing to them the inseparable human advantages which will follow a religious course, what notion will they conceive of 'the strait gate' and 'narrow way?' of the amputation of a 'right hand?' of the excision of a 'right eye?' of the other strong metaphors by which the Christian warfare is shadowed out? of 'crucifying the flesh?' of 'mortifying the old man?' of 'dying unto sin?' of 'overcoming the world?' Do you not think their meek and compassionate Saviour who died for your children, loved them as well as you love them? And if this were his language, ought it not to be yours? It is the language of true love; of that love with which a merciful God loved the world, when he spared not his own Son. Do not fear to tell your children what he told his disciples, that 'in the world they shall have tribulation;' but teach them to rise superior to it, on *his* principle, by 'overcoming the world.' Do not then try to conceal from them, that the life of a Christian is necessarily opposite to the life of the world; and do not seek by a vain attempt at accommodation to reconcile that difference which Christ himself has pronounced to be irreconcilable.

May it not be partly owing to the want of a due introduction to the knowledge of the real nature and spirit of religion, that so many young Christians, who set out in a fair and flourishing way, decline and wither when they come to perceive the requisitions of experimental christianity? requisitions which they had not suspected of making any part of the plan; and from which, when they afterwards discover them, they shrink back, as not prepared and hardened for the unexpected contest.

People are no more to be cheated into religion than into learning. The same spirit which influences your oath in a court of justice should influence your discourse in that court of equity —your family. Your children should be told the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It is unnecessary to add, that it must be done gradually and discreetly. We know whose example we have for postponing that which the mind is not yet prepared to receive: 'I have many things yet to say to you, but ye cannot bear them *now*.' Accustom them to reason by analogy. Explain to them that great *worldly* attainments are never made without great sacrifices; that the merchant cannot become rich without industry; the statesman eminent without labour; the scholar learned without study; the hero renowned without danger: would it not then, on human principles, be unreasonable to think that the Christian alone should obtain a triumph without a warfare? the highest prize with the lowest exertion? an eternal crown without a present cross? and that heaven is the only reward which the idle may reckon upon? No: though salvation 'be the *gift* of God,' yet it must be '*worked out*.' Convince your young friends, however, that in this case the difficulty of the battle bears no proportion to the prize of the victory. In one respect, indeed, the point of resemblance between worldly and Christian pursuits fails, and that most advantageously for the Christian; for while, even by the most probable means, which are the union of talents with diligence, no human prosperity can be *insured* to the worldly candidate; while the most successful adventurer may fail by the fault of another; while the best concerted project of the statesman may be crushed; the bravest hero lose the battle; the brightest genius fail of getting bread; and while moreover, the pleasure arising even from success in these may be no sooner tasted than it is poisoned by a more prosperous rival; the persevering Christian is safe and certain of obtaining *his* object; no misfortunes can defeat *his* hope; no competition can endanger *his* success; for though another gain, he will not lose; nay, the success of another, so far from diminishing his gain, is an addition to it; the more he diffuses, the richer he grows: his blessings are enlarged by communication; and that mortal hour which cuts off for ever the hopes of worldly men, crowns and consummates his.

Beware at the same time of setting up any act of self-denial or mortification as the *procuring* cause of salvation. This would be a presumptuous project to *purchase* that eternal life which is declared to be the 'free *gift* of God.' This would be to send your children, not to the Gospel to learn their christianity, but to the monks and ascetics of the middle ages; it would be sending them to Peter the hermit, and the holy fathers of the desert, and not to Peter the apostle and his Divine Master. Mortification is not the price; it is nothing more than the discipline of a soul of which sin is the disease, the diet prescribed by the great Physician. Without this guard the young devout Christian would be led to fancy that abstinence, pilgrimage and penance might be adopted as the cheap substitute for the subdued desire, the resisted temptation, the conquered corruption, and the obedient will; and would be almost in as much danger, on the one hand, of self-righteousness arising from austerities and mortification, as she would be, on the other, from self-gratification in the indulgences of the world. And while you carefully impress on her the necessity of living a life of strict obedience if she would please God, do not neglect to remind her also that a complete renunciation of her own performances as a ground of merit, *purchasing* the favour of God by their own intrinsic worth, is included in that obedience.

It is of the last importance in stamping on young minds a true impression of the genius of christianity, to possess them with a conviction that it is the purity of the motive which not only gives worth and beauty, but which, in a Chris-

tian sense gives life and soul to the best action; nay, that while a right intention will be acknowledged and accepted at the final judgment, even without the act, the act itself will be disowned which wanted the basis of a pure design.

Thou didst well that it was in thy *heart* to build me a temple,' said the Almighty to that monarch, whom yet he permitted not to build it. How many splendid actions will be rejected in the great day of retribution, to which statues and monuments have been raised on earth, while their almost deified authors shall be as much confounded at their own unexpected reprobation, as at the Divine acceptance of those 'whose life the world counted madness.' It is worthy of remark, that 'Depart from me, I never knew you,' is not the malediction denounced on the sceptic, or the scoffer, or the profligate, and the libertine, but on the high professor, on the unfruitful worker of 'miracles,' on the unsanctified utterer of 'prophecies;' for even acts of piety wanting the purifying principle, however they may dazzle men, offend God. Cain sacrificed, Balaam prophesied, Rousseau wrote the most sublime panegyric on the *Son of Mary*, VOLTAIRE BUILT A CHURCH! nay, so superior was *his* affectation of sanctity, that he ostentatiously declared, that while others were raising churches to *saints*, there was one man at least who would erect *his* church to God:* that God whose altars he was overthrowing, whose name he was vilifying, whose gospel he was exterminating, and the very name of whose Son he had solemnly pledged himself to blot from the face of the earth!

Though it be impossible here to enumerate all those Christian virtues which should be impressed in the progress of a Christian education, yet in this connexion I cannot forbear mentioning one which more immediately grows out of the subject; and to remark that the principle which should be the invariable concomitant of all instruction, and especially of religious instruction, is *humility*. As this temper is inculcated in every page of the Gospel, as it is deducible from every precept and every action of Christ; that is a sufficient intimation that it should be made to grow out of every study, that it should be grafted on every acquisition. It is the turning point, the leading principle indicative of the very genius, of the very being of Christianity. The chastising quality should therefore be constantly made in education to operate as the only counteraction of that knowledge which puffeth up.'—Youth should be taught that as humility is the discriminating characteristic of our religion, therefore a proud Christian, a haughty disciple of a crucified Master, furnishes perhaps a stronger opposition in terms than the whole compass of language can exhibit.—They should be taught that humility being the appropriate grace of Christianity, is precisely the thing which makes Christian and pagan virtues *essentially* different. The virtues of the Romans, for instance, were obviously founded in pride; as a proof of this, they had not even a word in their copious language to express humility, but what was used in a bad sense, and conveyed the idea of meanness or vileness, of baseness and servility Christianity so stands on its own single ground, is so far from assimilating itself to the spirit of other religions, that, unlike the Roman emperor, who, though he would not become a Christian, yet ordered that the image of Christ should be set up in the pantheon with those of the heathen gods, and be worshipped in common with them; Christianity not only rejects all such partnerships with other religions, but it pulls down their images, defaces their temples, tramples on their honours, founds its own existence on the ruins of spurious religions and spurious virtues, and will be every thing when it is admitted to be any thing.

Will it be going too much out of the way to observe, that Christian Britain retaliates upon pagan Rome? For if the former used humility in a bad sense, has not the latter learnt to use pride in a good one? May we without impertinence venture to remark, that in the deliberations of as honourable and upright political assemblies as ever adorned, or, under Providence upheld a country; in orations which leave us nothing to envy in Attic or Roman eloquence in their best days; it were to be wished that we did not borrow from Rome an epithet which suited the genius of her religion as much as it militates against ours? The panegyrist of the battle of Marathon, of Platea, or of Zama, might with propriety speak of a 'proud day,' or a 'proud event,' or a 'proud success.' But surely the Christian encomiasts of the battle of the Nile, might, from their abundance, select an epithet better appropriated to such a victory—a victory which, by preserving Europe, has perhaps preserved that religion which sets its foot on the very neck of pride, and in which the conqueror himself, even in the first ardours of triumph, forgot not to ascribe the victory to ALMIGHTY GOD. Let us leave to the enemy both the terms and the thing; arrogant words being the only weapons in which we must ever vail to their decided superiority. As we must despair of the victory, let us disdain the contest.

Above all things then you should beware that your pupils do not take up with a vague, general, and undefined religion, but look to it that their Christianity be really the religion of Christ. Instead of slurring over the doctrines of the Cross, as disreputable appendages to our religion, which are to be disguised or got over as well as we can, but which are never to be dwelt upon, take care to make these your grand fundamental articles. Do not dilute or explain away these doctrines, and by some elegant periphrasis *hint* at a Saviour instead of making him the foundation-stone of your system. Do not convey primary, and plain, and awful, and indispensable truths elliptically, I mean as something that is to be understood without being expressed; nor study fashionable circumlocutions to avoid names and things on which our salvation hangs, in order to prevent your discourse from being offensive. Persons who are thus instructed in religion with more good-breeding than seriousness and simplicity, imbibe a distaste for plain scriptural language: and the Scriptures themselves are so little in use with a certain fashionable class of readers, that when the doctrines and language of the Bible occa-

* Deo erexit Voltaire, is the inscription affixed by himself on his church at Ferney.

sionally occur in other authors, or in conversation, they present a sort of novelty and peculiarity which offend; and such readers as disuse the Bible, are apt from a supposed delicacy of taste, to call that precise and puritanical, which is in fact sound and scriptural. Nay, it has several times happened to the author to hear persons of sense and learning ridicule insulated sentiments and expressions that have fallen in their way, which they would have treated with decent respect, had they known them to be, as they really were, texts of Scripture. This observation is hazarded with a view to enforce the importance of early communicating religious knowledge, and of infusing an early taste for the venerable phraseology of Scripture.

The persons in question thus possessing a kind of pagan Christianity, are apt to acquire a sort of a pagan expression also, which just enables them to speak with complacency of the 'Deity,' of a 'first cause,' and of 'conscience.' Nay, some may even go so far as to talk of 'the Founder of our religion,' of the 'Author of Christianity,' in the same general terms, as they would talk of the prophet of Arabia, or the lawgiver of China, of Athens, or of the Jews. But their refined ears revolt not a little at the unadorned name of Christ, and especially the naked and unqualified term of our Saviour, or Redeemer, carries with it a queerish, inelegant, not to say suspicious sound.—They will express a serious disapprobation of what is wrong, under the moral term of *vice*, or the forensic term of *crime;* but they are apt to think that the Scripture term of *sin* has something fanatical in it and, while they discover a respect for morality, they do not much relish holiness, which is indeed the specific and only morality of a Christian.—They will speak readily of a man's reforming, or leaving off a vicious habit, or growing more correct in some individual practice; but the idea conveyed under any of the Scripture phrases signifying a total change of heart, they would stigmatize as the very shibboleth of a sect, though it is the language of a Liturgy they affect to admire and of a Gospel which they profess to receive.

CHAP. XIII.

Hints suggested for furnishing young persons with a scheme of prayer.

THOSE who are aware of the inestimable value of prayer themselves, will naturally be anxious not only that this duty should be earnestly inculcated on their children, but that they should be taught it in the best manner; and *such* parents need little persuasion or counsel on the subject. Yet children of decent and orderly (I will not say of strictly religious) families are often so superficially instructed in this important business, that when they are asked what prayers they use, it is not unusual for them to answer, 'the Lord's Prayer and the *Creed.*' And even some who are better taught, are not always made to understand with sufficient clearness the specific distinction between the two; that the one is the confession of their *faith*, and the other the model for their *supplications.* By this confused and indistinct beginning, they set out with a perplexity in their ideas which is not always completely disentangled in more advanced life.

An intelligent mother will seize the first occasion which the child's opening understanding shall allow, for making a little course of lectures on the Lord's Prayer, taking every division or short sentence separately; for each furnishes valuable materials for a distinct lecture. The child should be led gradually through every part of this divine composition; she should be taught to break it into all the regular divisions, into which indeed it so naturally resolves itself. She should be made to comprehend one by one each of its short but weighty sentences; to amplify and spread them out for the purpose of better understanding them, not in their most extensive and critical sense, but in their most simple and obvious meaning. For in those condensed and substantial expressions every word is an ingot and will bear beating out; so that the teacher's difficulty will not so much be what she shall say as what she shall suppress; so abundant is the expository matter which this succinct pattern suggests.

When the child has a pretty good conception of the meaning of each division, she should then be made to observe the connexion, relation and dependance of the several parts of this prayer one upon another; for there is a great method and connexion in it.—We pray that the 'kingdom of God may come,' as the best means to 'hallow his name;' and that by us, the obedient subjects of his kingdom, 'his will may be done.' A judicious interpreter will observe how logically and consequently one clause grows out of another, though she will use neither the word logical nor consequence; for all explanations should be made in the most plain and familiar terms, it being words, and not things, which commonly perplex children, if, as it sometimes happens, the teacher, though not wanting sense, wants perspicuity and simplicity.*

The young person from being made a complete mistress of this short composition (which as it is to be her guide and model through life, too much pains cannot be bestowed on it) will have a clearer conception, not only of its individual contents, but of prayer in general, than many ever attain, though their memory has been perhaps loaded with long and unexplained forms, which they have been accustomed to swallow in the lump without scrutiny and without discrimination. Prayer should not be so swallowed. It is a regular prescription which should stand analysis and examination: it is not a charm, the successful operation of which depends on your blindly taking it, without knowing what is in it, and in which the good you receive is promoted by your ignorance of its contents.

* It might perhaps be a safe rule to establish for prayer in general, to suspect that any petition which cannot in some shape or other be accommodated to the spirit of some part of this prayer may not be right to be adopted. Here, temporal things are kept in their due subordination, they are asked for moderately, as an acknowledgment of our dependance and of God's power; 'for our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of these things.'

I would have it understood that by these little comments, I do not mean that the child should be put to learn dry, and to her unintelligible expositions; but that the exposition is to be colloquial. And here I must remark in general, that the teacher is sometimes unreasonably apt to relieve herself at the child's expense, by loading the *memory* of a little creature on occasions in which far other faculties should be put in exercise. The child herself should be made to furnish a good part of this extemporaneous commentary by her answers; in which answers she will be much assisted by the judgment the teacher uses in her manner of questioning. And the youthful understanding, when its powers are properly set at work, will soon strengthen by exercise, so as to furnish reasonable if not very correct answers.

Written forms of prayer are not only useful and proper, but indispensably necessary to begin with. But I will hazard the remark, that if children are thrown *exclusively* on the best forms, if they are made to commit them to memory like a copy of verses, and to repeat them in a dry, customary way, they will produce little effect on their minds. They will not understand what they repeat, if we do not early open to them the important *scheme* of prayer. Without such an elementary introduction to this duty, they will afterwards be either ignorant or enthusiasts, or both. We should give them *knowledge* before we can expect them to make much progress in *piety*, and as a due preparative to it: Christian instruction in this resembling the Sun, who, in the course of his communications, gives light before he gives heat. And to labour to excite a spirit of devotion without first infusing that knowledge out of which it is to grow, is practically reviving the popish maxim, that ignorance is the mother of devotion, and virtually adopting the popish rule of praying in an unknown tongue.

Children, let me again observe, will not attend to their prayers if they do not understand them; and they will not understand them, if they are not taught to analyze, to dissect them, to know their component parts, and to methodise them.

It is not enough to teach them to consider prayer under the general idea that it is an application to God for what they want, and an acknowledgment to Him for what they have. This, though true in the gross, is not sufficiently precise and correct. They should learn to define and to arrange all the different parts of prayer. And as a preparative to prayer itself, they should be impressed with as clear an idea as their capacity and the nature of the subject will admit, of 'Him with whom they have to do.' His omnipresence is perhaps, of all his attributes, that of which we may make the first practical use, Every head of prayer is founded on some great scriptural truths, which truths the little analysis here suggested will materially assist to fix in their minds.

On the knowledge that 'God is,' that he is an infinitely Holy Being, and that 'he is the rewarder of all them that diligently seek him,' will be grounded the first part of prayer, which is *adoration*. The creature, devoting itself to the Creator, or *self-dedication*, next presents itself. And if they are first taught that important truth, that as needy creatures they want help, which may be done by some easy analogy, they will easily be led to understand how naturally *petition* forms a most considerable branch of prayer: and divine grace being among the things for which they are to petition, this naturally suggests to the mind the doctrine of the influences of the Holy Spirit. And when to this is added the conviction which will be readily worked into an ingenuous mind, that as offending creatures they want pardon, the necessity of *confession* will easily be made intelligible to them. But they should be brought to understand that it must not be such a general and vague confession as awakens no sense of personal humiliation, as excites no recollection of their own more peculiar and individual faults. But it must be a confession founded on self-knowledge, which is itself to arise out of the practice of self-examination: for want of this sort of discriminating habit, a well-meaning but ill-instructed girl may be caught confessing the sins of some other person and omitting those which are more especially her own. On the gladness of heart natural to youth, it will be less difficult to impress the delightful duty of *thanksgiving*, which forms so considerable a branch of prayer. In this they should be habituated to recapitulate not only their general, but to enumerate their peculiar, daily, and incidental mercies, in the same specific manner as they should have been taught to detail their individual and personal *wants* in the petitionary, and their *faults* in the confessional part. The same warmth of feeling which will more readily dispose them to express their gratitude to God in thanksgiving, will also lead them more gladly to express their love to their parents and friends, by adopting another indispensable, and, to an affectionate heart, pleasing part of prayer, which is *intercession.*

When they had been made, by a plain and perspicuous mode of instruction, fully to understand the different nature of all these; and when they clearly comprehend that *adoration*, *self-dedication*, *confession*, *petition*, *thanksgiving*, and *intercession*, are distinct heads, which must not be involved in each other, you may exemplify the rules by pointing out to them these successive branches in any well written form. And they will easily discern, that ascription of glory to that God to whom we owe so much, and on whom we so entirely depend, is the conclusion into which a Christian's prayer will naturally resolve itself. It is hardly needful to remind the teacher that our truly Scriptural Liturgy invariably furnishes the example of presenting *every* request in the name of the great Mediator. For there is no access to the Throne of grace but by *that new and living way*. In the liturgy too they will meet with the best exemplifications of prayers, exhibiting separate specimens of each of the distinct heads we have seen suggesting.

But in order that the minds of young persons may, without labour or difficulty, be gradually brought into such a state of preparation as to be benefitted by such a little course of lectures as we have recommended · they should, from

the time when they were first able to read, have been employing themselves at their leisure hours, in laying in a store of provisions for their present demands. And here the memory may be employed to good purpose; for being the first faculty which is ripened, and which is indeed perfected when the others are only beginning to unfold themselves, this is an intimation of Providence that it should be the first seized on for the best uses. It should therefore be devoted to lay in a stock of the more easy and devotional parts of Scripture. The Psalms alone are an inexhaustible storehouse of rich materials.* Children, whose minds have been early well furnished from these, will be competent at nine or ten years old to produce from them, and to select with no contemptible judgment, suitable examples of all the parts of prayer; and will be able to extract and appropriate texts under each respective head, so as to exhibit, without help, complete specimens of every part of prayer. By confining them entirely to the sense, and nearly to the words of Scripture, they will be preserved from enthusiasm, from irregularity, and conceit. By being obliged continually to apply for themselves, they will get a habit in all their difficulties of 'searching the Scriptures,' which may be hereafter useful to them on other and more trying occasions. But I would at first *confine* them to the Bible; for were they allowed with equal freedom to ransack other books with a view to get helps to embellish their little compositions, or rather compilations, they might be tempted to pass off for their own what they pick up from others, which might tend at once to make them both vain and deceitful. This is a temptation to which they are too much laid open when they find themselves extravagantly commended for any pilfered passage with which they decorate their little themes and letters. But in the present instance there is no danger of any similar deception, for there is such a sacred signature stamped on every Scripture phrase, that the owner's name can never be defaced or torn off from the goods, either by fraud or violence.

It would be well, if in those Psalms which children were first directed to get by heart, an eye were had to this their future application; and that they were employed, but without any intimation of your subsequent design, in learning such as may be best turned to this account. In the hundred and thirty-ninth, the first great truth to be imprinted on the young heart, the divine omnipresence, as was before observed, is unfolded with such a mixture of majestic grandeur, and such an interesting variety of intimate and local circumstances, as is likely to seize on the quick and lively feelings of youth. The awful idea that that Being whom she is taught to reverence, is not only *in general* 'acquainted with all her ways,' but that 'he is about her path, and about her bed,' bestows such a sense of real and present existence on *him* of whom she is apt to conceive as having his distant habitation only in Heaven, as will greatly help her to realize the sense of his actual presence.

The hundred and third Psalm will open to the mind rich and abundant sources of expression for gratitude and thanksgiving, and it includes the acknowledgment of spiritual as well as temporal favours. It illustrates the compassionate mercies of God by familiar and domestic images, of such peculiar tenderness and exquisite endearment, as are calculated to strike upon every chord of filial fondness in the heart of an affectionate child. The fifty-first supplies an infinite variety of matter in whatever relates to confession of sin, or to supplication for the aids of the Spirit. The twenty-third abounds with captivating expressions of the protecting goodness and tender love of their heavenly Father, conveyed by pastoral imagery of uncommon beauty and sweetness: in short, the greater part of those charming compositions overflows with materials for every head of prayer.

The child who, while she was engaged in learning these scriptures, was not aware that there was any specific object in view, or any farther end to be answered by it, will afterwards feel an unexpected pleasure arising from the application of her petty labours, when she is called to draw out from her little treasury of knowledge the stores she has been insensibly collecting; and will be pleased to find that without any fresh application to study, for she is now obliged to exercise a higher faculty than memory, she has lying ready in her mind the materials with which she is at length called upon to work. Her judgment must be set about selecting one, or two, or more texts which shall contain the substance of every specific head of prayer before noticed; and it will be a farther exercise to her understanding to concatenate the detached parts into one regular whole, occasionally varying the arrangement as she likes; that is, changing the order, sometimes beginning with invocation, sometimes with confession, sometimes dwelling longer on one part, sometimes on another. As the hardships of a religious Sunday are often so pathetically pleaded, as making one of the heavy burdens of religion; and as the friends of religion are so often called upon to mitigate its intolerable rigours, by recommending pleasant employment, might not such an exercise as has been here suggested help, by varying its occupations, to lighten its load.

The habits of the pupil being thus early formed, her memory, attention and intellect being bent in a right direction, and the exercise invariably maintained, may we not reasonably hope that her *affections* also, through divine grace, may become interested in the work, till she will be enabled 'to pray with the spirit and with the understanding also?' She will now be qualified to use a well-composed form, if necessary, with seriousness and advantage; for she will now use it not mechanically, but rationally. That which before appeared to her a mere mass of good words, will now appear a significant composition, exhibiting variety, and regularity, and beauty: and while she will have

* This will be so far from spoiling the cheerfulness, or impeding the pleasures of childhood, that the author knows a little girl who, before she was seven years old, had learnt the whole Psalter through a second time; and that without any diminution of uncommon gayety of spirits or any interference with the elegant acquirements suited to her station.

the farther advantage of being enabled by her improved judgment to distinguish and select for her own purpose such prayers as are more judicious and more scriptural, it will also habituate her to look for plan, and design, and lucid order, in other works.

A VIEW

OF THE PRINCIPLES AND CONDUCT

PREVALENT AMONG WOMEN OF RANK AND FORTUNE.

CHAP. XIV.

The practical use of female knowledge, with a sketch of the female character, and a comparative view of the sexes.

The chief end to be proposed in cultivating the understandings of women, is to qualify them for the practical purposes of life. Their knowledge is not often like the learning of men, to be reproduced in some literary composition, nor ever in any learned profession; but it is to come out in conduct. It is to be exhibited in life and manners. A lady studies, not that she may qualify herself to become an orator or a pleader not that she may learn to debate, but to act. She is to read the best books, not so much to enable her to talk of them, as to bring the improvement which they furnish, to the rectification of her principles and the formation of her habits. The great uses of study to a woman are to enable her to regulate her own mind, and to be instrumental to the good of others.

To woman, therefore, whatever be her rank, I would recommend a predominance of those more sober studies, which, not having display for their object, may make her wise without vanity, happy without witnesses, and content without panegyrists; the exercise of which will not bring celebrity, but improve usefulness. She should pursue every kind of study which will teach her to elicit truth; which will lead her to be intent upon realities; will give precision to her ideas; will make an exact mind. She should cultivate every study which, instead of stimulating her sensibility, will chastise it; which will neither create an excessive or a false refinement; which will give her definite notions; will bring the imagination under dominion; will lead her to think, to compare, to combine, to methodise; which will confer such a power of discrimination, that her judgment shall learn to reject what is dazzling, if it be not solid; and to prefer, not what is striking, or bright, or new, but what is just. That kind of knowledge which is rather fitted for home consumption than foreign exportation, is peculiarly adapted to women.*

It is because the superficial nature of their education furnishes them with a false and low standard of intellectual excellence, that women have too often become ridiculous by the unfounded pretensions of literary vanity; for it is not the really learned, but the smatterers who have generally brought their sex into discredit, by an absurd affectation, which has set them on despising the duties of ordinary life. There have not indeed been wanting (but the character is not now common) *precieuses ridicules*, who assuming a superiority to the sober cares which ought to occupy their sex, have claimed a lofty and supercilious exemption from the dull and plodding drudgeries

Of this dim speck called earth!

There have not been wanting ill-judging females who have affected to establish an unnatural separation between talents and usefulness, instead of bearing in mind that talents are the great appointed instruments of usefulness, who have acted as if knowledge were to confer on woman a kind of fantastic sovereignty which should exonerate her from the discharge of female duties; whereas it is only meant the more eminently to qualify her for the performance of them. A woman of real sense will never forget, that while the greater part of her proper duties are such as the most moderately gifted may fulfil with credit (since Providence never makes that to be very difficult, which is generally necessary) yet that the most highly endowed are equally bound to fulfil them; and let her remember that the humblest of these offices, performed on Christian principles, are wholesome for the minds even of the most enlightened, as they tend to the casting down of those 'high imaginations' which women of genius are too much tempted to indulge.

For instance; ladies whose natural vanity has been aggravated by a false education, may look down on *economy* as a vulgar attainment; unworthy of the attention of an highly cultivated intellect; but this is the false estimate of a shallow mind. Economy, such as a woman of fortune is called on to practise, is not merely the petty detail of small daily expenses, the shabby curtailments and stinted parsimony of a little mind, operating on little concerns; but it is the exercise of a sound judgment exerted in the comprehensive outline of order, of arrangements, of distribution; of regulations by which alone well governed societies, great and small, subsist. She who has the best regulated mind will, other things being equal, have the best regulated family. As in the superintendance of the universe, wisdom is seen in its *effects*; and as in the visible works of Providence that which goes on with such beautiful regularity is the result not of chance but of design, so that manage-

* May I be allowed to strengthen my own opinion with the authority of Dr. Johnson, that a *woman cannot have too much arithmetic*? It is a solid practical acquirement, in which there is much use and little display; it is a quiet sober kind of knowledge, which she acquires for herself and her family, and not for the world.

ment which seems the most easy is commonly the consequence of the best concerted plan: and a well concerted plan is seldom the offspring of an ordinary mind. A sound economy is a sound understanding brought into action: it is calculation realized; it is the doctrine of proportion reduced to practice: it is foreseeing consequences, and guarding against them; it is expecting contingencies and being prepared for them. The difference is, that to a narrow minded vulgar economist, the details are continually present; she is overwhelmed by their weight, and is perpetually bespeaking your pity for her labours, and your praise for her exertions; she is afraid you will not see how much she is harassed. She is not satisfied that the machine moves harmoniously, unless she is perpetually exposing every secret spring to observation. Little events and trivial operations engross her whole soul; while a woman of sense, having provided for their probable recurrence, guards against the inconveniences, without being disconcerted by the casual obstructions which they offer to her general scheme. Subordinate expenses and inconsiderable retrenchments should not swallow up that attention which is better bestowed on regulating the general scale of expense; correcting and reducing an overgrown establishment, and reforming radical and growing excesses.

Superior talents, however, are not so common, as, by their frequency, to offer much disturbance to the general course of human affairs: and many a lady, who tacitly accuses herself of neglecting her ordinary duties because she is a *genius*, will perhaps be found often to accuse herself as unjustly as good St. Jerome, when he laments that he was beaten by the angel for being too Ciceronian in his style.

The truth is, women who are so puffed up with the conceit of talents as to neglect the plain duties of life, will not frequently be found to be women of the best abilities. And here may the author be allowed the gratification of observing, that those women of real genius and extensive knowledge, whose friendship has conferred honour and happiness on her own life, have been, in general, eminent for economy and the practice of domestic virtues; and have risen superior to the poor affectation of neglecting the duties and despising the knowledge of common life, with which literary women have been frequently, and not always unjustly, accused.

A romantic girl with a pretension to sentiment, which her still more ignorant friends mistake for genius (for in the empire of the blind the one-eyed are kings) and possessing something of a natural ear, has perhaps in her childhood exhausted all the images of grief, and love, and fancy picked up in her desultory poetical reading, in an elegy on a sick linnet, or a sonnet on a dead lap-dog; she begins thenceforward to be considered as a prodigy in her little circle; surrounded with fond and flattering friends, every avenue to truth is shut out; she has no opportunity of learning that her fame is derived not from her powers, but her position; and that when an impartial critic shall have made all the necessary deductions, such as— that she is a neighbour, that she is a relation, that she is a female, that she is young, that she has had no advantages, that she is pretty perhaps—when her verses come to be stripped of all their extraneous appendages, and the fair author is driven off her 'vantage ground' of partiality, sex, and favour, she will commonly sink to the level of ordinary capacities. While those more quiet women, who have meekly sat down in the humble shades of prose and prudence, by a patient perseverance in rational studies, rise afterwards much higher in the scale of intellect, and acquire a much larger stock of sound knowledge for far better purposes than mere display. And though it may seem a contradiction, yet it will generally be found true, that girls who take to scribble, are the least studious, the least reflecting, and the least rational. They early acquire a false confidence in their own unassisted powers: it becomes more gratifying to their natural vanity to be always pouring out their minds on paper, than to be drawing into them fresh ideas from richer sources. The original stock, small perhaps at first, is soon spent. The subsequent efforts grow more and more feeble, if the mind which is continually exhausting itself, be not also continually replenished; till the latter compositions become little more than reproductions of the same ideas, and fainter copies of the same images, a little varied and modified perhaps, and not a little diluted and enfeebled.

It will be necessary to combat vigilantly that favourite plea of lively ignorance, that study is an enemy to originality. Correct the judgment, while you humble the vanity of the young untaught pretender, by convincing her that those half-formed thoughts and undigested ideas which she considers as proofs of her invention, prove only, that she wants taste and knowledge. That while conversation must polish and reflection invigorate her ideas, she must improve and enlarge them by the accession of various kinds of virtue and elegant literature; and that the cultivated mind will repay with large interest the seeds sown in it by judicious study. Let it be observed, I am by no means encouraging young ladies to turn authors: I am only reminding them, that

Authors before they write should read

I am only putting them in mind that to be ignorant is not to be original.

These self-taught, and self-dependant scribblers pant for the unmerited and unattainable praise of fancy and of genius, while they disdain the commendation of judgment, knowledge, and perseverance which would probably be within their reach. To extort admiration they are accustomed to boast of an impossible rapidity in composing; and while they insinuate how little time their performances cost them, they intend you should infer how perfect they might have made them had they condescended to the drudgery of application: but application with them implies defect of genius. They take superfluous pains to convince you that there was neither learning nor labour employed in the work for which they solicit your praise: Alas! the judicious eye too soon perceives it! though it does *not* perceive that native strength and mother-

wit, which in works of real genius make some amends for the negligence, which yet they do not justify. But instead of extolling those effusions for their facility, it would be kind in friends rather to blame them for their crudeness: and when the young candidates for fame, are eager to prove in how short a time such a poem has been struck off, it would be well to regret that they had not either taken a longer time, or refrained from writing at all; as in the former case the work would have been less defective, and in the latter the writer would have discovered more humility, and self-distrust.

A general capacity for knowledge, and the cultivation of the understanding at large, will always put a woman into the best state of directing her pursuits into those particular channels which her destination in life may afterwards require. But she should be carefully instructed that her talents are only a means to a still higher attainment, and that she is not to rest in them as an end: that merely to exercise them as instruments for the acquisition of fame and the promotion of pleasure is subversive of her delicay as a woman, and contrary to the spirit of a christian.

Study, therefore, is to be considered as the means of strengthening the mind, and of fitting it for higher duties, just as exercise is to be considered as an instrument for strengthening the body for the same purpose! And the valetudinarian who is religiously punctual in the observance of his daily rides to promote his health, and rests in that as an end, without so much as intending to make his improved health an instrument of increased usefulness, acts on the same low and selfish principle with her who reads merely for pleasure and for fame, without any design of devoting the more enlarged and invigorated mind to the glory of the Giver.

But there is one *human* consideration which would perhaps more effectually tend to damp in an aspiring woman the ardours of literary vanity (I speak not of real genius, though there the remark often applies) than any which she will derive from motives of humility, or propriety, or religion; which is, that in the judgment passed on her performances, she will have to encounter the mortifying circumstance of having her sex always taken into account; and her highest exertions will probably be received with the qualified approbation *that it is really extraordinary for a woman.* Men of learning, who are naturally inclined to estimate works in proportion as they appear to be the result of art, study, and institution, are inclined to consider even the happier performances of the other sex as the spontaneous productions of a fruitful but shallow soil; and to give them the same kind of praise which we bestow on certain sallads, which often draw from us a sort of wondering commendation, not indeed as being worth much in themselves, but because by the lightness of the earth, and a happy knack in the gardener, these indifferent cresses spring up in a night, and therefore we are ready to wonder they are no worse.

As to men of sense, however, they need be the less hostile to the improvement of the other sex, as they themselves will be sure to be gainers by it; the enlargement of the female understanding being the most likely means to put an end to those petty and absurd contentions for equality which female smatterers so anxiously maintain. I say smatterers, for between the first class of both sexes the question is much more, rarely, and always more temperately agitated. Co-operation and not competition is indeed the clear principle we wish to see reciprocally adopted by those higher minds in each sex which readily approximate the nearest to each other. The more a woman's understanding is improved, the more obviously she will discern that there can be no happiness in any society where there is a perpetual struggle for power; and the more her judgment is rectified, the more accurate views will she take of the station she was born to fill, and the more readily will she accommodate herself to it; while the most vulgar and ill informed women are ever most inclined to be tyrants, and those always struggle most vehemently for power, who feel themselves at the greatest distance from deserving it; and who would not fail to make the worst use of it when attained. Thus the weakest reasoners are always the most positive in debate; and the cause is obvious, for *they* are unavoidably driven to maintain their pretensions by violence, who want arguments and reasons to prove that they are in the right.

There is this singular difference between a woman vain of her wit, and a woman vain of her beauty; that the beauty while she is anxiously alive to her own fame, is often indifferent enough about the beauty of other women, and provided she herself is sure of your admiration, she does not insist on your thinking that there is another handsome woman in the world; while she who is vain of her genius, more liberal at least in her vanity, is jealous for the honour of her whole sex, and contends for the equality of their pretensions as a body, in which she feels that her own are involved as an individual. The beauty vindicates her own rights, the wit the rights of women; the beauty fights for herself; the wit for a party; and while the more selfish though more moderate beauty

> would but be queen for life,

he public spirited wit struggles to abrogate the Salique law of intellect, and to enthrone

> a whole sex of queens.

At the revival of letters in the sixteenth and the following century, the controversy about his equality was agitated with more warmth han wisdom; and the process was instituted and carried on, on the part of the female complainant, with that sort of acrimony which always raises a suspicion of the justice of any cause; for violence commonly implies doubt, nd invective indicates weakness rather than strength. The novelty of that knowledge that was then bursting out from the dawn of a long dark night, kindled all the ardours of a female mind, and the ladies fought zealously for a portion of that renown which the reputation of learning was beginning to bestow. Besides their own pens, they had for their advocates all those needy authors who had any thing to hope from their power, their riches or their influence; nd so giddy did some of these literary ladies

become by the adulation of their numerous panegyrists, that through these repeated draughts of inebriating praise, they even lost their former moderate measure of sober-mindedness, and grew to despise the equality for which they had before contended, as a state below their merit, and unworthy of their acceptance. They now scorned to litigate for what they had already thought they obviously possessed, and nothing short of the palm of superiority was at length considered as adequate to their growing claims. When court-ladies and princesses were the candidates, they could not long want champions to support their cause; by these champions female authorities were produced as if paramount to facts; quotations from these female authors were considered as proofs, and their point-blank assertions stood for solid and irrefragable arguments. In those parasites who offered this homage to female genius, the homage was the effect neither of truth, nor of justice, nor of conviction. It arose rather out of gratitude, or it was a reciprocation of flattery; it was sometimes vanity, it was often distress, which prompted the adulation; it was the want of a patroness; it was the want of a dinner. When a lady, and especially as it then often happened, when a lady who was noble or royal sat with gratifying docility at the foot of a professor's chair; when she admired the philosopher, or took upon her to protect the theologian, whom his rivals among his own sex were tearing to pieces, what could the grateful professor or delighted theologian do less in return than make the apotheosis of her who had the penetration to discern his merit and the spirit to reward it? Thus in fact it was not so much *her* vanity as his own, that he was often flattering, though she was the dupe of her more deep and designing panegyrist.

But it is a little unfortunate for the perpetuity of that fame which the encomiast had made over to his patroness, in the never-dying records of his verses and orations, that in the revolution of a century or two the names of the flattered are now almost as little known as the works of the flatterers. *Their memorial is perished with them.** An instructive lesson, reminding us that whoever bestows, or assumes a reputation disproportioned to the merit of the claimant, will find that reputation as little durable as it is solid. For this literary warfare which engaged such troops of the second-hand authors of the age in question in such continual skirmishes, and not a few pitched battles; which provoked so much rancour, so many volumes, and so little wit; so much vanity, so much flattery, and so much invective, produced no useful nor lasting effect. Those who promised themselves that their names would outlive 'one half of round eternity,' did not reach the end of the century in which the boast was made; and those who prodigally offered the incense, and those who greedily snuffed up the fumes, are buried in the same blank oblivion!

But when the temple of Janus seemed to have been closed; or when at worst the peace was only occasionally broken by a slight and random shot from the hand of some single straggler; it appears that though open rebellion had ceased, yet the female claim had not been renounced; it had only (if we may change the metaphor) lain in abeyance. The contest has recently been revived with added fury, and with multiplied exactions; for whereas the ancient demand was merely a kind of imaginary prerogative, a speculative importance, a mere titular right, a shadowy claim to a few unreal acres of Parnassian territory; the revived contention has taken a more serious turn, and brings forward political as well as intellectual pretensions; and among the innovations of this innovating period, the imposing term of *rights* has been produced to sanctify the claim of our female pretenders, with a view not only to rekindle in the minds of women a presumptuous vanity dishonourable to their sex, but produced with a view to excite in their hearts an impious discontent with the post which God has assigned them in this world.

But *they* little understand the true interests of woman who would lift her from the important duties of her allotted station, to fill with fantastic dignity a loftier but less appropriate niche. Nor do they understand her true happiness, who seek to annihilate distinctions from which she derives advantages, and to attempt innovations which would depreciate her real value. Each sex has its proper excellencies which would be lost, were they melted down into the common character by the fusion of the new philosophy. Why should we do away distinctions which increase the mutual benefits and enhance the satisfactions of life? Whence, but by carefully preserving the original marks of difference stamped by the hand of the Creator, would be derived the superior advantage of mixed society? Is either sex so abounding in perfection as to be independent on the other for improvement? Have men no need to have their rough angles filed off, and their harshness and asperities smoothed and polished by assimilating with beings of more softness and refinement! Are the ideas of women naturally so *very* judicious, are their principles so *invincibly* firm, are their views so *perfectly* correct, are their judgments so *completely* exact, that there is occasion for no additional weight, no superadded strength, no increased clearness, none of that enlargement of mind, none of that additional invigoration which may be derived from the aids of the stronger sex? What identity could advantageously supercede such an enlivening opposition, such an interesting variety of character? Is it not then more wise, as well as more honourable to move contentedly in the plain path which Providence has obviously marked out to the sex, and in which custom has for the most part rationally confirmed them, rather than to stray, awkwardly, unbecomingly, and unsuccessfully, in a forbidden road? Is it not desirable to be the lawful possessors of a lesser domestic territory, rather than the turbulent usurpers of a wider foreign empire? to be good originals, than bad imitators? to be the best thing of one's own kind, rather than an inferior thing even if it were of an higher kind? to be excellent women rather than indifferent men?

Is the author then undervaluing her own sex? —No. It is her zeal for their true *interests*

* See Brantome, Pere le Moine, Mons Thomas, &c

which leads her to oppose their imaginary *rights*. It is her regard for their happiness which makes her endeavour to cure them of a feverish thirst for a fame as unattainable as inappropriate; to guard them against an ambition as little becoming the delicacy of their female character as the meekness of their religious profession. A little Christian humility and sober-mindedness are worth all the empty renown which was ever attained by the misapplied energies of the sex; it is worth all the wild metaphysical discussion which has ever been obtruded under the name of reason and philosophy; which has unsettled the peace of vain women, and forfeited the respect of reasonable men. And the most elaborate definition of ideal rights, and the most hardy measures for obtaining them, are of less value in the eyes of a truly amiable woman, than 'that meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price.'

Natural propensities best mark the designations of Providence as to their application. The fin was not more clearly bestowed on the fish that he should swim, nor the wing given to the bird that he should fly, than superior strength of body, and a firmer texture of mind was given to man, that he might preside in the deep and daring scenes of action and of council; in the complicated arts of government, in the contention of arms, in the intricacies and depths of science, in the bustle of commerce, and in those professions which demand a higher reach, and a wider range of powers. The true value of woman is not diminished by the imputation of inferiority in those talents which do not belong to her, of those qualities in which her claim to excellence does not consist. She has other requisites, better adapted to answer the end and purposes of her being, from 'Him who does all things well;' who suits the agent to the action; who accommodates the instrument to the work.

Let not then aspiring, because ill-judging woman, view with pining envy the keen satirist, hunting vice through all the doublings and windings of the heart; the sagacious politician, leading senates and directing the fate of empires; the acute lawyer, detecting the obliquities of fraud; and the skilful dramatist, exposing the pretensions of folly; but let her ambition be consoled by reflecting, that those who thus excel, to all that Nature bestows, and books can teach, must add besides, that consummate knowledge of the world, to which a delicate woman has no fair avenues, and which even if she could attain, she would never be supposed to have come honestly by.

In almost all that comes under the description of polite letters, in all that captivates by imagery, or warms by just and affecting sentiment, women are excellent. They possess in a high degree that delicacy and quickness of perception, and that nice discernment between the beautiful and defective which comes under the denomination of taste. Both in composition and action they excel in details; but they do not so much generalize their ideas as men, nor do their minds seize a great subject with so large a grasp. They are acute observers, and accurate judges of life and manners, as far as their own sphere of observation extends; but they describe a smaller circle. A woman sees the world, as it were, from a little elevation in her own garden, whence she makes an exact survey of home scenes, but takes not in that wider range of distant prospects which he who stands on a loftier eminence commands. Women have a certain *tact* which often enables them to feel what is just, more instantaneously than they can define it. They have an intuitive penetration into character, bestowed on them by Providence, like the sensitive and tender organs of some timid animals, as a kind of natural guard to warn, of the approach of danger, beings who are often called to act defensively.

In summing up the evidence, if I may so speak, of the different capacities of the sexes, one may venture, perhaps, to assert, that women have equal *parts*, but are inferior in *wholeness* of mind, in the integral understanding: that though a superior woman may possess single faculties in equal perfection, yet there is commonly a juster proportion in the mind of a superior man: that if women have in an equal degree the faculty of fancy which creates images, and the faculty of memory which collects and stores ideas, they seem not to possess in equal measure the faculty of comparing, combining, analysing, and separating these ideas; that deep and patient thinking which goes to the bottom of a subject; nor that power of arrangement which knows how to link a thousand connected ideas in one dependant train, without losing sight of the original idea out of which the rest grow, and on which they all hang. The female too, wanting steadiness in her intellectual pursuits, is perpetually turned aside by her characteristic tastes and feelings. Woman in the career of genius, is the Atalanta, who will risk losing the race by running out of her road to pick up the golden apple; while her male competitor, without, perhaps, possessing greater natural strength or swiftness, will more certainly attain his object, by direct pursuit, by being less exposed to the seductions of extraneous beauty, and will win the race, not by excelling in speed, but by despising the bait.*

Here it may be justly enough retorted, that as it is allowed the education of women is so defective, the alleged inferiority of their minds may be accounted for on that ground, more justly than by ascribing it to their natural make. And, indeed, there is so much truth in the remark, that till women shall be more reasonably educated, and till the native growth of their mind shall cease to be stinted and cramped, we have no juster ground for pronouncing that their understanding has already reached its highest attainable point, than the Chinese would have for affirming that their women have attained to the greatest possible perfection in walking, whilst the first care is, during their infancy, to cripple their feet! At least, till the female sex are more carefully instructed, this question will always

* What indisposes even reasonable women to concede these points is, that the weakest man instantly lays old on the concession; and on the mere ground of sex, lumes himself on his own individual superiority, inrring that the silliest man is superior to the first rate oman

remain as undecided as to the *degree* of difference between the masculine and feminine understanding, as the question between the understandings of blacks and whites; for until men and women, and until Africans and Europeans are put more nearly on a par in the cultivation of their minds, the shades of distinction, whatever they be, between their native abilities, can never be fairly ascertained.

And when we see (and who will deny that we see it frequently?) so many women nobly rising from under all the pressure of a disadvantageous education, and a defective system of society, and exhibiting the most unambiguous marks of a vigorous understanding, a correct judgment, and a sterling piety, it reminds us of those shining lights which have now and then burst out through all the 'darkness visible' of the Romish church, have disencumbered themselves from the gloom of ignorance, shaken off the fetters of prejudice, and with a noble energy risen superior to all the errors of a corrupt theology.

But whatever characteristical distinctions may exist; whatever inferiority may be attached to woman from the slighter frame of her body, or the more circumscribed powers of her mind; from a less systematic education, and from the subordinate station she is called to fill in life; there is one great and leading circumstance which raises her importance, and even establishes her equality. *Christianity* has exalted women to true and undisputed dignity; in Christ Jesus, as there is neither 'rich nor poor,' 'bond nor free,' so there is neither 'male nor female.' In the view of that immortality, which is brought to light by the Gospel, she has no superior. 'Women' (to borrow the idea of an excellent prelate) 'make up one half of the human race; equally with men redeemed by the blood of Christ.' In this their true dignity consists; here their best pretensions rest; here their highest claims are allowed.

All disputes then for pre-eminence between the sexes, have only for their object the poor precedence for a few short years, the attention of which would be better devoted to the duties of life and the interests of eternity.

And as the final hope of the female sex is equal, so are their present means, perhaps, more favourable, and their opportunities, often, less obstructed than those of the other sex. In their Christian course, women have every superior advantage, whether we consider the natural make of their minds, their leisure for acquisition in youth, or their subsequently less exposed mode of life. Their hearts are naturally soft and flexible, open to impressions of love and gratitude; their feelings tender and lively; all these are favourable to the cultivation of a devotional spirit. Yet while we remind them of these native benefits, they will do well to be on their guard lest this very softness and ductility lay them more open to the seductions of temptation and error.

They have in the native constitution of their minds, as well as from the relative situations they are called to fill, a certain sense of attachment and dependance, which is peculiarly favourable to religion. They feel, perhaps, more intimately the want of a strength which is not their own. Christianity brings that superinduced strength; it comes in aid of their conscious weakness, and offers the only true counterpoise to it.—'Woman be thou healed of thine infirmity,' is still the heart-cheering language of a gracious Saviour.

Women also bring to the study of Christianity fewer of those prejudices which persons of the other sex too often early contract. Men, from their classical education, acquire a strong partiality for the manners of pagan antiquity, and the documents of pagan philosophy: this, together with the impure taint caught from the loose descriptions of their poets, and the licentious language even of their historians (in whom we reasonably look for more gravity) often weakens the good impressions of young men, and at least confuses their ideas of piety, by mixing them with so much heterogeneous matter. Their very spirits are imbued all the week with the impure follies of a depraved mythology; and it is well if even on Sundays they can hear of the 'true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.' While women, though struggling with the same natural corruptions, have commonly less knowledge to unknow, and fewer schemes to unlearn; they have not to shake off the pride of system, and to disencumber their minds from the shackles of favourite theories: they do not bring from the porch or the academy any 'oppositions of science' to obstruct their reception of those pure doctrines taught on the Mount: doctrines which ought to find a readier entrance into minds uninfected with the pride of the school of Zeno, or the libertinism of that of Epicurus.

And as women are naturally more affectionate than fastidious, they are likely both to read and to hear with a less critical spirit than men: they will not be on the watch to detect errors, so much as to gather improvement; they have seldom that hardness which is acquired by dealing deeply in books of controversy, but are more inclined to the perusal of works which quicken the devotional feelings, than to such as awaken a spirit of doubt and scepticism. They are less disposed to consider the compositions they read, as materials on which to ground objections and answers, than as helps to faith and rules of life. With these advantages, however, they should also bear in mind that their more easily received impressions being often less abiding, and their reason less open to conviction by means of the strong evidences which exist in favour of the truth of Christianity, 'they ought, therefore, to give the more earnest heed to the things which they have heard, lest at any time they should let them slip.' Women are, also, from their domestic habits, in possession of more leisure and tranquility for religious pursuits, as well as secured from those difficulties and strong temptations to which men are exposed in the tumult of a bustling world. Their lives are more regular and uniform, less agitated by the passions, the businesses, the contentions, the shock of opinions, and the opposition of interests which divide society and convulse the world.

If we have denied them the possession of talents which might lead them to excel as lawyers, they are preserved from the peril of having their

principles warped by that too indiscriminate defence of right and wrong, to which the professors of the law are exposed. If we should question their title to eminence as mathematicians, they are happily exempt from the danger to which men devoted to that science are said to be liable: namely, that of looking for demonstration on subjects, which by their very nature, are incapable of affording it. If they are less conversant in the powers of nature, the structure of the human frame, and the knowledge of the heavenly bodies than philosophers, physicians, and astronomers; they are, however, delivered from the error into which many of each of these have sometimes fallen, I mean from the fatal habit of resting in second causes, instead of referring all to the first; instead of making 'the heavens declare the glory of God, and proclaim his handy work;' instead of concluding, when they observe 'how fearfully and wonderfully we are made, marvellous are thy works O Lord, and that my soul knoweth right well.'

And let the weaker sex take comfort, that in their very exemption from privileges, which they are sometimes foolishly disposed to envy, consists not only their security, but their happiness. If they enjoy not the distinctions of public life and high offices, do they not escape the responsibility attached to them, and the mortification of being dismissed from them? If they have no voice in deliberative assemblies, do they not avoid the load of duty inseparably connected with such privileges? Preposterous pains have been taken to excite in women an uneasy jealousy, that their talents are neither rewarded with public honours nor emoluments in life; nor with inscriptions, statues, and mausoleums after death. It has been absurdly represented to them as an hardship, that while they are expected to perform duties, they must yet be content to relinquish honours, and must unjustly be compelled to renounce fame, while they must sedulously labour to deserve it.

But for christian women to act on the low views suggested to them by their ill-judging panegyrists; for christian women to look up with a giddy head and a throbbing heart, to honours and remunerations, so little suited to the wants and capacities of an immortal spirit, would be no less ridiculous than if christian heroes should look back with an envy on the old pagan reward of ovations, oak garlands, parsley crowns, and laurel wreaths. The Christian hope more than reconciles Christian women to these petty privations, by substituting a nobler prize for their ambition, 'the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;' by substituting, for that popular and fluctuating voice, which may cry, 'Hosanna,' and 'crucify' in a breath, that 'favour of God which is eternal life.'

If women should lament it as a disadvantage attached to their sex, that their character is of so delicate a texture as to be sullied by the slightest breath of calumny, and that the stain once received is indelible; yet are they not led by that very circumstance as if indistinctively to shrink from all those irregularities to which the loss of character is so certainly expected to be attached; and to shun with keener circumspection the most distant approach towards the confines of danger? Let them not lament it as an hardship, but account it as a privilege, that the delicacy of their sex impels them more scrupulously to avoid the very 'appearance of evil;' let them not regret that the consciousness of their danger serves to secure their purity by placing them at a greater distance, and in a more deep intrenchment from the evil itself.

Though it be one main object of this little work, rather to lower than to raise any desire of celebrity in the female heart; yet I would awaken it to a just sensibility to honest fame: I would call on women to reflect that our religion has not only made them heirs to a blessed immortality hereafter, but has greatly raised them in the scale of being here, by lifting them to an importance in society unknown to the most polished ages of antiquity. The religion of Christ has even bestowed a degree of renown on the sex beyond what any other religion ever did. Perhaps there are hardly so many virtuous women (for I reject the long catalogue whom their vices have transferred from oblivion to infamy) named in all the pages of Greek or Roman history, as are handed down to eternal fame, in a few of those short chapters with which the great Apostle to the Gentiles has concluded his epistles to his converts. 'Of devout and honourable women,' the sacred scriptures record 'not a few.' Some of the most affecting scenes, the most interesting transactions, and the most touching conversations which are recorded of the Saviour of the world, passed with women. *Their* examples have supplied some of the most eminent instances of faith and love. *They* are the first remarked as having 'ministered to him of their substance.' *Theirs* was the praise of not abandoning their despised Redeemer when he was led to execution, and under all the hopeless circumstances of his ignominious death, *they* appear to have been the *last* attending at his tomb, and the *first* on the morning when he arose from it. *Theirs* was the privilege of receiving the earliest consolation from their risen Lord; *theirs* was the honour of being first commissioned to announce his glorious resurrection. And even to have furnished heroic confessors, devoted saints, and unshrinking martyrs to the Church of Christ, has not been the exclusive honour of the bolder sex.

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CHAP. XV.

CONVERSATION.—*Hints suggested on the subject.—On the tempers and dispositions to be introduced in it.—Errors to be avoided. Vanity under various shapes the cause of those errors.*

THE sexes will naturally desire to appear to each other, such as each believes the other will best like; their conversation will act reciprocally; and each sex will wish to appear more or less rational as they perceive it will more or less recommend them to the other. It is therefore to be regretted, that many men, even of distinguished sense and learning, are too apt to consider the society of ladies as a scene in which they are rather to rest their understandings,

than to exercise them; while ladies, in return, are too much addicted to make their court by lending themselves to this spirit of trifling; they often avoid making use of what abilities they have; and affect to talk below their natural and acquired powers of mind; considering it as a tacit and welcome flattery to the understanding of men, to renounce the exercise of their own.

Now since taste and principles thus mutually operate; men, by keeping up conversation to its proper standard, would not only call into exercise the powers of mind which women actually possess; but would even awaken in them new energies which they do not know they possess; and men of sense would find their account in doing this, for their own talents would be more highly rated by companions who were better able to appreciate them; and they would be receiving as well as imparting improvement. And on the other hand, if young women found it did not often recommend them in the eyes of those whom they most wish to please, to be frivolous and superficial, they would become more sedulous in correcting their own habits. Whenever fashionable women indicate a relish for instructive conversation, men will not be apt to hazard what is vain, or unprofitable; much less will they ever presume to bring forward what is loose or corrupt, where some signal has not been previously given, that it will be acceptable, or at least that it will be pardoned.

Ladies commonly bring into company minds already too much relaxed by petty pursuits, rather than overstrained by intense application. The littleness of the employments in which they are usually engaged, does not so exhaust their spirits as to make them stand in need of that relaxation from company which severe application or overwhelming business makes requisite for studious or public men. The due consideration of this circumstance might serve to bring the sexes more nearly on a level in society; and each might meet the other half way; for that degree of lively and easy conversation, which is a necessary refreshment to the learned and the busy, would not decrease in pleasantness by being made of so rational a cast as would yet somewhat raise the minds of women, who commonly seek society as a scene of pleasure, not as a refuge from intense thought or exhausting labour.

It is a disadvantage even to those women who keep the best company, that it is unhappily almost established into a system, by the other sex, to postpone every thing like instructive discourse till the ladies are withdrawn; their retreat serving as a kind of signal for the exercise of intellect. And in the few cases in which it happens that any important discussion takes place in their presence, they are for the most part considered as having little interest in serious subjects. Strong truths, whenever such happen to be addressed to them, are either diluted with flattery, or kept back in part, or softened to their taste; or if the ladies express a wish for information on any point, they are put off with a compliment, instead of a reason. They are reminded of their beauty when they are seeking to inform their understanding, and are considered as beings who must be contented to behold every thing through a false medium, and who are not expected to see and to judge of things as they really exist.

Do we then wish to see, the ladies, whose want of opportunities leaves them so incompetent on many points, and the modesty of whose sex ought never to allow them even to be as shining as they are able; do we wish to see them take the lead in metaphysical disquisitions? Do you wish them to plunge into the depths of theological polemics,

> And find no end in wand'ring mazes lost?

Do we wish them to revive the animosities of the Bangorian controversy, or to decide the process between the Jesuits and the five propositions of Jansenius? Do we wish to enthrone them in the professor's chair, to deliver oracles, harangues, and dissertations? to weigh the merits of every new production in the scales of Quintilian, or to regulate the unities of dramatic composition *by Aristotle's clock*? Or renouncing those foreign aids, do we desire to behold them vain of a native independence of soul, inflated with their original powers, labouring to strike out sparks of wit, with a restless anxiety to shine, which generally fails, and with an anxious affectation to please, which never pleases?

> Discurs de bon mots, fades caracteres!

All this be far from them!—But we *do* wish to see the conversation of well-bred women rescued from vapid common place, from uninteresting tattle, from trite and hackneyed communications, from frivolous earnestness, from false sensibility, from a warm interest about things of no moment, and an indifference to topics the most important; from a cold vanity, from the ill concealed overflowings of self-love, exhibiting itself under the smiling mask of an engaging flattery, and from all the factitious manners of artificial intercourse. We *do* wish to see the time passed in polished and intelligent society, considered among the beneficial, as well as the pleasant portions of our existence, and not consigned over, as it too frequently is, to premeditated triflings, to empty dulness, to unmeaning levity, to systematic unprofitableness. Let me not however, be misunderstood: it is not meant to prescribe that ladies should affect to discuss lofty subjects, so much as to suggest that they should bring good sense, simplicity, precision, and truth to the discussion of those common subjects, of which, after all, both the business and conversation of mankind must be in a great measure made up.

It is too well known how much the dread of imputed pedantry keeps off every thing that verges towards *learned*, and the terror of imputed enthusiasm frightens away any thing that approaches to *serious* conversation; so that the two topics which peculiarly distinguish us, as rational and immortal beings, are by general consent in a good degree banished from the society of rational and immortal creatures. But we might almost as consistently give up the comforts of fire, because a few persons have been burnt, and the benefit of water, because some

others have been drowned, as relinquish the enjoyments of intellectual, and the blessings of religious intercourse, because the learned world has sometimes been infested with pedants, and the religious world with fanatics.

As in the momentous times in which we live it is next to impossible to pass an evening in company but the talk will so inevitably revert to politics, that without any premeditated design, every one present shall infallibly be able to find out to which side the other inclines; why, in the far higher concern of eternal things, should we so carefully shun every offered opportunity of bearing even a casual testimony to the part we espouse in religion? Why, while we make it a sort of point of conscience to leave no doubt on the mind of a stranger, whether we adopt the party of Pitt or Fox, shall we choose to leave it very problematical whether we belong to God or Baal? Why, in religion, as well as in politics, should we not act like people who, having their all at stake, cannot forbear now and then adverting for a moment to the object of their grand concern, and dropping, at least, an incidental intimation of the side to which they belong?

Even the news of the day, in such an eventful period as the present, may lend frequent occasions to a woman of principle to declare, without parade, her faith in a moral Governor of the world; her trust in a particular Providence; her belief in the Divine Omnipotence; her confidence in the power of God, in educing good from evil, in his employing wicked nations, not as favourites, but instruments; her persuasion that present success is no proof of the Divine favour; in short, some intimation that she is not ashamed to declare that her mind is under the influence of Christian faith; that she is steadily governed by an unalterable principle, of which no authority is too great to make her ashamed, which no occasion is too trivial to call into exercise. A general concurrence in habitually exhibiting this spirit of decided faith and holy trust, would inconceivably discourage that pert and wakeful infidelity which is ever on the watch to produce itself: and, as we have already observed, if women, who derive authority from their rank or talents, did but reflect how their sentiments are repeated, and how their authority is quoted, they would be so on their guard, that general society might become a scene of profitable communication and common improvement; and the young who are looking for models on which to fashion themselves, would become ashamed and afraid of exhibiting any thing like levity, or scepticism, or profaneness.

Let it be understood, that it is not meant to intimate that serious subjects should make up the bulk of conversation; this, as it is impossible, would also often be improper. It is not intended to suggest that they should be abruptly introduced, or unsuitably prolonged; but only that they should not be systematically shunned; nor the brand of fanaticism be fixed on the person who, with whatever propriety hazards the introduction of such subjects. It is evident, however, that this general dread of serious topics arises a good deal from an ignorance of the true nature of Christianity; people avoid it on the principle expressed by the vulgar phrase of the danger of playing with edge tools. They conceive of religion as something which involves controversy, and dispute; something either melancholy or mischievous; something of an inflammatory nature which is to stir up ill humours and hatred; they consider it as a question which has two sides; as of a sort of party-business which sets friends at variance. So much is this notion adopted, that I have seen announced two works of considerable merit, in which it was stipulated as an attraction, that the subject of religion, as being likely to excite anger and party distinctions, should be carefully excluded. Such is the worldly idea of the spirit of that religion whose direct object it was to bring 'peace and good will to men!'

Women too little live or converse up to the standard of their understandings, and however we have deprecated affectation or pedantry, let it be remembered, that both in reading and conversing, the understanding gains more by stretching than stooping. If by exerting itself it may not attain to all its desires, yet it will be sure to gain something. The mind by always applying itself to objects below its level, contracts its dimensions, and shrinks itself to the size, and lowers itself to the level, of the object about which it is conversant: while the understanding which is active and aspiring, expands and raises itself, grows stronger by exercise, larger by diffusion, and richer by communication.

But the taste of general society is not favourable to improvement. The seriousness with which the most frivolous subjects are agitated, and the levity with which the most serious are despatched, bear a pretty exact proportion to each other. Society too is a sort of magic lantern; the scene is perpetually shifting. In this incessant change we must

Catch, e'er she fall, the Cynthia of the minute;—

and the fashion of the present minute, evanescent probably like its rapid precursors, while in many it leads to the cultivation of real knowledge, has also not unfrequently led even the gay and idle to the affectation of mixing a sprinkling of science with the mass of dissipation. The ambition of appearing to be well informed breaks out even in those triflers who will not spare time from their pleasurable pursuits sufficient for acquiring that knowledge, of which, however, the reputation is so desirable. A little smattering of philosophy often dignifies the pursuits of their day, without rescuing them from the vanities of the night. A course of lectures (that admirable assistant for enlightening the understanding) is not seldom resorted to as a means to substitute the appearance of knowledge for the fatigue of application. But where this valuable help is attended merely like any other public exhibition, as a fashionable pursuit, and is not furthered by correspondent reading at home it often serves to set off the reality of ignorance with the affectation of skill. But instead of producing in conversation a few reigning scientific terms, with a familiarity and readiness, which

Amaze the unlearn'd, and make the learned smile,

would it not be more modest even for those who

are better informed to avoid the use of technical terms whenever the idea can be as well conveyed without them? For it argues no real ability to know the *names* of tools; the ability lies in knowing their *use*: and while it is in the thing, not in the term, that real knowledge consists, the charge of pedantry is attached to the use of the term, which would not attach to the knowledge of the science.

In the faculty of speaking well, ladies have such a happy promptitude of turning their slender advantages to account, that there are many who, though they have never been taught a rule of syntax, yet by a quick facility in profiting from the best books and the best company, hardly ever violate one; and who often exhibit an elegant and perspicuous arrangement of style without having studied any of the laws of composition. Every kind of knowledge which appears to be the result of observation, reflection, and natural taste, sits gracefully on women.—Yet on the other hand it sometimes happens, that ladies of no contemptible natural parts are too ready to produce, not only pedantic expressions, but crude and unfounded notions; and still oftener to bring forward obvious and hackneyed remarks; which float on the very surface of a subject, with the imposing air of recent invention, and all the vanity of conscious discovery. This is because their acquirements have not been worked into their minds by early instruction; what knowledge they have gotten stands out as it were above the very surface of their minds, like the *appliquée* of the embroiderer, instead of having been interwoven with the growth of the piece, so as to have become a part of the stuff. They did not, like men, acquire what they know while the texture was forming. Perhaps no better preventive could be devised for this literary vanity, than *early* instruction: that woman would be less likely to be vain of her knowledge who did not remember the time when she was ignorant. Knowledge that is *burnt in* if I may so speak, is seldom obtrusive, rarely impertinent.

Their reading also has probably consisted much in abridgments from larger works, as was observed in a former chapter; this makes a readier talker, but a shallower thinker, than the perusal of books of more bulk. By these scanty sketches, their critical powers have not been formed; for in those crippled mutilations they have seen nothing of that just proportion of parts, that skilful arrangement of the plan, and that artful distribution of the subject, which, while they prove the master hand of the writer, seem also to form the taste of the reader, far more than a disjointed skeleton, or a beautiful feature or two, can do. The instruction of women is also too much drawn from the scanty and penurious sources of short writings of the essay kind: this, when it comprises the best part of a person's reading, makes a smatterer and spoils a scholar; for though it supplies current talk, yet it does not make a full mind; it does not furnish a storehouse of materials, to stock the understanding, neither does it accustom the mind to any trains of reflection: for the subjects, besides being each succinctly, and, on account of this brevity, superficially treated, are distinct and disconnected; they arise out of no concatenation of ideas, nor any dependent series of deduction. Yet on this pleasant but desultory reading, the mind which has not been trained to severe exercise, loves to repose itself in a sort of creditable indolence, instead of stretching its energies in the wholesome labour of consecutive investigation.*

I am not discouraging study at a late period of life, or even censuring slender knowledge; information is good at whatever period and in whatever degree it be acquired. But in such cases it should be attended with peculiar humility: and the new possesso should bear in mind, that what is fresh to her nas been long known to others; and she should therefore be aware of advancing as novel that which is common, and obtruding as rare that which every body possesses.—Some ladies are eager to exhibit proofs of their reading, though at the expense of their judgment, and will introduce in conversation quotations quite irrelevant to the matter in hand, because they happen at the instant to recur to their recollection, or were, perhaps, found in the book they have just been reading. Unappropriate quotations or strained analogy may show reading, but they do not show taste. That just and happy allusion which knows by a word how to awaken a corresponding image, or to excite in the hearer the idea which fills the mind of the speaker, shows less pedantry and more taste than bare citations; and a mind imbued with elegant knowledge will inevitably betray the opulence of its resources, even on topics which do not relate to science or literature. It is the union of parts and acquirements, of spirit and modesty, which produces the indefinable charm of conversation. Well-informed persons will easily be discovered to have read the best books, though they are not always detailing lists of authors; for a muster-roll of names may be learnt from the catalogue as well as from the library.—Though honey owes its exquisite taste to the fragrance of the sweetest flowers, yet the skill of the little artificer appears in this, that the delicious stores are so admirably worked up, and there is such a due proportion observed in mixing them, that the perfection of the whole consists in its not tasting individually of the rose, the jessamine, the carnation, or any of those sweets of the very essence of all which it is compounded. But true judgment will discover the infusion which true modesty will not display; and even common subjects passing through a cultivated understanding, borrow a flavour of its richness. A power of apt selection is more valuable than any power of general retention; and an apposite remark, which shoots straight to the point, demands a higher capacity of mind than an hundred simple acts of memory; for the business of the memory is only to store up materials which the understanding is to mix and work up with its native

* The writer cannot be supposed desirous of depreciating the value of those many beautiful periodical essays which adorn our language. But, perhaps, it might be better to regale the mind with them singly, at different times, than to read, at the same sitting, a multitude of short pieces on dissimilar and unconnected topics, *by way of getting through the book*

faculties, and which the judgment is to bring out and apply. But young women who have more vivacity than sense, and more vanity than vivacity, often risk the charge of absurdity to escape that of ignorance, and will even compare two authors who are totally unlike, rather than miss the occasion to show that they have read both.

Among the arts to spoil conversation some ladies possess that of suddenly diverting it from the channel in which it was beneficially flowing, because some *word* used by the person who was speaking has accidentally struck out a new train of thinking in their own minds, and not because the general *idea* expressed has struck out a corresponding idea, which sort of collision is indeed the way of eliciting the true fire. Young ladies, whose sprightliness has not been disciplined by a correct education, consider how things may be prettily said, rather than how they may be prudently or seasonably spoken; and willingly hazard being thought wrong, or rash, or vain, for the chance of being reckoned pleasant. The graces of rhetoric captivate them more than the justest deductions of reason; when they have no arms they use flowers, and to repel an argument, they arm themselves with a metaphor.—Those also who do not aim so high as eloquence, are often surprised that you refuse to accept of a prejudice instead of a reason; they are apt to take up with a probability instead of a demonstration, and cheaply put you off with an assertion, when you are requiring a proof. The mode of education which renders them light in assumption, and superficial in reasoning, renders them also impatient of opposition; and if they happen to possess beauty, and to be vain of it, they may be tempted to consider that this is an additional proof of their being always in the right. In this case, they will not ask you to submit your judgment to the force of their argument, so much as to the authority of their charms.

The same fault in the mind, strengthened by the same error (a neglected education) leads lively women often to pronounce on a question, without examining it: on any given point they seldomer *doubt* than men; not because they are more clear-sighted, but because they have not been accustomed to look into a subject long enough to discover its depths and its intricacies; and not discerning its difficulties, they conclude that it has none. Is it a contradiction to say, that they seem at once to be quick-sighted and short-sighted? What they see at all, they commonly see at once; a little difficulty discourages them; and, having caught a hasty glimpse of a subject, they rush to this conclusion, that either there is no more to be seen, or that what is behind will not pay them for the trouble of searching. They pursue their object eagerly, but not regularly; rapidly, but not pertinaciously; for they want that obstinate patience of investigation which grows stouter by repulse. What they have not attained, they do not believe exists: what they cannot seize at once, they persuade themselves is not worth having.

Is a subject of moment started in company? While the more sagacious are deliberating on its difficulties, and viewing it under all its aspects, in order to form a competent judgment before they decide; you will often find the most superficial woman present determine the matter, without hesitation. Not seeing the perplexities in which the question is involved, she wonders at the want of penetration in the man whose very penetration keeps him silent. She secretly despises the dull perception and slow decision of him who is patiently *untying* the knot which she fancies she exhibits more dexterity by *cutting*. By this shallow sprightliness, of which vanity is commonly the radical principle, the most ignorant person in the company leads the conversation, while he whose opinion is best worth having is discouraged from delivering it, and an important subject is dismissed without discussion, by inconsequent flippancy and voluble rashness. It is this abundance of florid talk, from superficial matter, which has brought on so many of the sex the charge of *inverting* the Apostle's precept, and being *swift* to *speak*, *slow* to *hear*.

If the great Roman orator could observe, that silence was so important a part of conversation, that 'there was not only an art but an eloquence in it,' how peculiarly does the remark apply to the modesty of youthful females! But the silence of listless and vapid ignorance, and the animated silence of sparkling intelligence, are two things almost as obviously distinct, as the wisdom and the folly of the tongue. An inviolable and marked attention may show that a woman is pleased with a subject, and an illuminated countenance may prove that she understands it almost as unequivocally as language itself could do; and this, with a modest question, which indicates at once rational curiosity and becoming diffidence, is in many cases as large a share of the conversation as it is decorous for feminine delicacy to take. It is also as flattering an encouragement as men of sense and politeness require, for pursuing useful topics in the presence of women, which they would be more disposed to do, did they oftener gain by it the attention which it is natural to wish to excite; and did women themselves discover that desire of improvement which liberal-minded men are pleased with communicating.

Yet do we not sometimes see an impatience to be heard (nor is it a *feminine* failing only) which good breeding can scarcely subdue? And even when these incorrigible talkers are compelled to be quiet, is it not evident that they are not silent because they are listening to what is said, but because they are thinking of what they themselves shall say when they can seize the first lucky interval for which they are so narrowly watching? The very turn of their countenance betrays that they do not take the slightest degree of interest in any thing that is said by others, except with a view to lie in wait for any little chasm in the discourse, on which they may lay hold, and give vent to their own overflowing vanity.

But conversation must not be considered as a stage for the display of our talents, so much as a field for the exercise and improvement of our virtues; as a means for promoting the glory of our Creator, and the good and happiness of our fellow creatures. Well-bred and intelligent

Christians are not, when they join in society, to consider themselves as entering the lists like intellectual prize-fighters, in order to exhibit their own vigour and dexterity, to discomfit their adversary, and to bear away the palm of victory. Truth and not triumph should be the invariable object; and there are few occasions in life, in which we are more unremittingly called upon to watch ourselves narrowly, and to resist the assaults of various temptations, than in conversation. Vanity, jealousy, envy, misrepresentation, resentment, disdain, levity, impatience, insincerity, and pride, will in turn solicit to be gratified. Constantly to struggle against the desire of being thought more wise, more witty, and more knowing, than those with whom we associate, demands the incessant exertion of Christian vigilance; a vigilance which the generality are far from suspecting to be at all necessary in the intercourse of common society. On the contrary, cheerful conversation is rather considered as an exemption and release from watchfulness, than as an additional obligation to it. But a circumspect soldier of Christ will never be off his post; even when he is not called to public combat by the open assaults of his great spiritual enemy, he must still be acting as a sentinel, for the dangers of an ordinary Christian will arise more from these little skirmishes which are daily happening in the warfare of human life, than from those pitched battles which more rarely occur, and for which he will probably think it sufficient to be armed.

But society, as was observed before, is not a stage on which to throw down our gauntlet, and prove our own prowess by the number of falls we give to our adversary; so far from it, true good-breeding as well as Christianity, considers as an indispensable requisite for conversation, the disposition to bring forward to notice any talent in others, which their own modesty, or conscious inferiority, would lead them to keep back. To do this with effect it requires a penetration exercised to discern merit, and a generous candour which delights in drawing it out. There are few who cannot converse tolerably on some one topic: what that is, we should try to discover, and in general introduce that topic, though to the suppression of any one on which we ourselves are supposed to excel: and however superior we may be in other respects to the persons in question, we may, perhaps, in that particular point, improve by them; or if we do not gain information, we shall at least gain a wholesome exercise to our humility and self-denial; we shall be restraining our own impetuosity; we shall, if we take this course on just occasions only, and so as to beware lest we gratify the vanity of others, be giving confidence to a doubting, or cheerfulness to a depressed spirit. And to place a just remark, hazarded by the diffident, in the most advantageous point of view; to call the attention of the inattentive, the forward, and the self-sufficient, to the unobtrusive merit of some quiet person in the company, who, though of much worth, is perhaps of little note; these are requisites for conversation, less brilliant, but far more valuable, than the power of exciting bursts of laughter by the brightest wit, or of exciting admiration by the most poignant sallies of ridicule.

Wit is, of all the qualities of the female mind, that which requires the severest castigation: yet the temperate exercise of this fascinating quality throws an additional lustre round the character of an amiable woman; for to manage with discreet modesty a dangerous talent, confers a higher praise than can be claimed by those from whom the absence of the talent removes the temptation to misemploy it. To women, wit is a peculiar perilous possession, which nothing short of the sober-mindedness of religion can keep in subjection; and perhaps there is scarcely any one order of human beings that requires the powerful curb of Christian control more than women whose genius has this tendency. Intemperate wit craves admiration as its natural aliment: it lives on flattery as its daily bread! The professed wit is a hungry beggar, subsisting on the extorted alms of perpetual panegyric; and like the vulture in the Grecian fable, the appetite increases by indulgence. Simple truth and sober approbation become tasteless and insipid to the palate daily vitiated by the delicious poignancies of exaggerated commendation. Under the above restrictions, however, wit may be safely and pleasantly exercised; for *chastised wit* is an elegant and well-bred, and not unfeminine quality. But *humour*, especially if it degenerates into imitation, or mimicry, is very sparingly to be ventured on; for it is so difficult totally to detach it from the suspicion of buffoonery, that a woman will be likely to lose more of the delicacy which is her appropriate grace, and without which every other quality loses its charm, than she will gain in another way in the eyes of the judicious, by the most successful display of humour.

A woman of genius, if she have true humility, will not despise those lesser arts which she may not happen to possess, even though she be sometimes put to the trial of having her superior mental endowments overlooked, while she is held cheap for being destitute of some more ordinary accomplishment. Though the rebuke of Themistocles* was just to one who thought that so great a general and politician should employ his time like an effeminate lutinist, yet he would probably have made a different answer if he had happened to understand music.

If it be true that some women are too apt to affect brilliancy and display in their own discourse, and to undervalue the more humble pretensions of less showy characters; it must be confessed also, that some of more ordinary abilities are now and then guilty of the opposite error and foolishly affect to value themselves on not making use of the understanding they really possess; and affect to be thought even more silly than they are. They exhibit no small satisfaction in ridiculing women of high intellectual endowments, while they exclaim, with much affected humility, and much real envy, that 'they are thankful *they* are not geniuses. Now, though we are glad to hear gratitude ex-

* 'Can you play on the lute?' said a certain Athenian to Themistocles. 'No,' replied he, 'but I can make a little village a great city.'

pressed on any occasion, yet the want of sense is really no such great mercy to be thankful for; and it would indicate a better spirit, were they to pray to be enabled to make a right use of the moderate understanding they possess, than to expose with a too visible pleasure, the imaginary or real defects of their more shining acquaintance. Women of the brightest faculties should not only 'bear those faculties meekly,' but should consider it as no derogation, cheerfully to fulfil those humbler offices which make up the business and the duties of common life, while they should always take into the account the nobler exertions as well as the higher responsibilities attached to higher gifts. In the mean time women of lower attainments should exert to the utmost such abilities as Providence has assigned them; and while they should not deride excellences which are above their reach, they should not despond at any inferiority which did not depend on themselves; nor, because God has denied them ten talents, should they forget that they are equally responsible for the one he *has* allotted them, but set about devoting that one with humble diligence to the glory of the giver.

Vanity, however, is not the monopoly of talents. Let not a young lady, therefore, fancy that she is humble, merely because she is not ingenious, or consider the absence of talents as the criterion of worth. Humility is not the exclusive privilege of dulness. Folly is as conceited as wit, and ignorance many a time outstrips knowledge in the race of vanity. Equally earnest competitions spring from causes less worthy to excite them than wit and genius. Vanity insinuates itself into the female heart under a variety of unsuspected forms, and is on the watch to enter it by seizing on many a little pass which was not thought worth guarding.

Who has not seen as restless emotion agitate the features of an anxious matron, while peace and fame hung trembling in doubtful suspense on the success of a soup or sauce, on which sentence was about to be pronounced by some consummate critic, as could have been excited by any competition for literary renown, or any struggle for contested wit? Anxiety for fame is by no means measured by the real value of the object pursued, but by the degree of estimation in which it is held by the pursuer. Nor was the illustrious hero of Greece more effectually hindered from sleeping by the trophies of Miltiades, than many a modish damsel by the eclipsing superiority of some newer decoration exhibited by her more successful friend.

There is another species of vanity in some women which disguises itself under the thin veil of an affected humility; they will accuse themselves of some fault from which they are remarkably exempt, and lament the want of some talent which they are rather notorious for possessing. Now though the wisest are commonly the most humble, and those who are freest from faults are most forward in confessing error; yet the practice we are censuring is not only a clumsy trap for praise, but a disingenuous intention, by renouncing a quality they eminently possess, to gain credit for others in which they are really deficient. All affectation involves a species of deceit. The Apostle when he enjoins, 'not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought,' does not exhort us to think *falsely* of our selves, but to think 'soberly;' and it is worth observing that in this injunction he does not use the word *speak*, but *think*, inferring possibly, that it would be safer to *speak* little of ourselves or not at all; for it is so far from being an unequivocal proof of our humility to talk even of our defects, that while we make *self* the subject, in whatever way, self-love contrives to be gratified, and will even be content that our faults should be talked of, rather than that we should not be talked of at all. Some are also attacked with such proud fits of humility, that while they are ready to accuse themselves of almost every sin in the lump, they yet take fire at the imputation of the slightest *individual* fault; and instantly enter upon their own vindication as warmly as if you, and not themselves, had brought forward the charge. The truth is, they ventured to condemn themselves, in the full confidence that you would contradict the self-accusation; the last thing they intended was that you should believe them, and they are never so much piqued and disappointed as when they are taken at their word.

Of the various shapes and undefined forms into which vanity branches out in conversation, there is no end. Out of restless desire to please, grows the vain desire to astonish: for from vanity, as much as from credulity, arises that strong love of the marvellous, with which the conversation of the ill-educated abounds. Hence that fondness for dealing in narratives hardly within the compass of possibility. Here vanity has many shades of gratification; those shades will be stronger or weaker, whether the relater chance to have been an eye-witness of the wonder she records; or whether she claim only the second-hand renown of its having happened to her friend, or the still remoter celebrity of its having been witnessed only by her friend's friend: but even though that friend only knew the man, who remembered the woman, who conversed with the person, who actually beheld the thing which is now causing admiration in the company, still *self*, though in a fainter degree, is brought into notice, and the relater contrives in some circuitous and distant way to be connected with the wonder.

To correct this propensity, 'to elevate and surprise,'* it would be well in mixed society to abstain altogether from hazarding stories, which though they may not be absolutely false, yet lying without the verge of probability, are apt to impeach the credit of the narrator; in whom the very consciousness that she is not believed, excites an increased eagerness to depart still farther from the soberness of truth, and induces a habit of vehement asseveration, which is too often called in to help out a questionable point.†

* The Rehearsal.

† This is also a good rule in composition. An event though it may actually have happened, yet if it be out of the reach of probability, or contrary to the common course of nature, will seldom be chosen as a subject by a writer of good taste; for he knows that a probable fiction will interest the feeling more than an unlikely truth. Verisimilitude is indeed the poet's truth, but the truth of the moralist is of a more sturdy growth.

Or if the propensity be irresistible, I would recommend to those persons who are much addicted to relate doubtful, or improbable, or wonderful circumstances, to imitate the example of the two great naturalists, Aristotle and Boyle, who not being willing to discredit their works with incredible realities threw all their improbabilities into a lump, under the general name of *Strange Reports*. May we not suspect that, in some instances, the chapter of strange reports would be a bulky one?

There is another shape, and a very deformed shape it is, in which loquacious vanity shows itself: I mean the betraying of confidence. Though the act be treacherous, yet the fault, in the first instance, is not treachery, but vanity. It does not so often spring from the mischievous desire of divulging a secret, as from the pride of having been trusted with it. It is the secret inclination of mixing *self* with whatever is important. The secret would be of little value, if the revealing it did not serve to intimate our connexion with it; the pleasure of its having been deposited with us would be nothing, if others may not know that it has been so deposited.—When we continue to see the variety of serious evils which this principle involves, shall we persist in asserting that vanity is a slender mischief?

There is one offence committed in conversation of much too serious a nature to be overlooked, or to be animadverted on without sorrow and indignation: I mean, the habitual thoughtless profaneness of those who are repeatedly invoking their Maker's name on occasions the most trivial. It is offensive in all its variety of aspects;—it is very pernicious in its *effects*;—it is a *growing* evil;—those who are most guilty of it, are from habit hardly conscious when they do it; are not aware of the sin; and for both these reasons without the admonitions of faithful friendship, are little likely to discontinue it. It is utterly INEXCUSABLE;—it has none of the palliatives of *temptation* which other vices plead, and in that respect stands distinguished from all others both in its nature and degree of guilt.—Like many other sins, however, it is at once cause and effect: it *proceeds* from want of love and reverence to the best of Beings, and *causes* the want of that love both in themselves and others. Yet with all these aggravations, there is perhaps, hardly any sin so frequently committed, so slightly censured, so seldom repented of, and so little guarded against. On the score of *impropriety* too, it is additionally offensive, as to being utterly repugnant to female delicacy, which often does not see the turpitude of this sin, while it affects to be shocked at swearing in a man. Now this species of profaneness is not only swearing, but, perhaps, in some respects, swearing of the worst sort; as it is a *direct* breach of an express command, and offends against the *very letter* of that law which says in so many words, THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN. It offends against politeness and *good breeding;* for those who commit it, little think of the pain they are inflicting on the sober mind, which is deeply wounded when it hears the holy name it loves dishonoured; and it is as contrary to good breeding to give pain, as it is to true piety to be profane. It is astonishing that the refined and elegant should not reprobate this practice for its coarseness and vulgarity, as much as the pious abhor it for its sinfulness.

I would endeavour to give some faint idea of the grossness of this offence, by an analogy (oh! how inadequate!) with which the feeling heart, even though not seasoned with religion, may yet be touched. To such I would earnestly say:—Suppose you had some beloved friend—to put the case still more strongly, a departed friend—a revered parent, perhaps—whose image never occurs without awaking in your bosom sentiments of tender love and lively gratitude; how would you feel if you heard this honourable name *bandied about* with unfeeling familiarity and indecent levity; or at best, thrust into every pause of speech as a vulgar expletive? Does not your affectionate heart recoil at the thought? And yet the hallowed name of your truest Benefactor, your heavenly Father, your best friend, to whom you are indebted for all you enjoy; who gives you those very friends in whom you so much delight, those very talents with which you dishonour him, those very organs of speech with which you blaspheme him, is treated with an irreverence, a contempt, a wantonness, with which you cannot bear the very thought or mention of treating a human friend. His name is impiously, is unfeelingly, is ungratefully singled out as the object of decided irreverence, of systematic contempt, of thoughtless levity. His sacred name is used indiscriminately to express anger, joy, grief, surprise, impatience; and what is almost still more unpardonable than all, it is wantonly used as a mere unmeaning expletive, which, being excited by no temptation, can have nothing to extenuate it; which, causing no emotion, can have nothing to recommend it, unless it be the pleasure of the sin.

Among the deep, but less obvious mischiefs of conversation, *misrepresentation* must not be overlooked. Self-love is continually at work, to give to all we say a bias in our own favour. The counteraction of this fault should be set about in the earliest stages of education. If young persons have not been discouraged in the natural, but evil, propensity to relate every dispute they have had with others to their own advantage; if they have not been trained to the bounden duty of doing justice even to those with whom they are at variance; if they have not been led to aim at a complete impartiality in their little narratives, and instructed never to take advantage of the absence of the other party, in order to make the story lean to their own side more than the truth will admit: how shall we in advanced life look for correct habits, for unprejudiced representations, for fidelity, accuracy, and unbiassed justice?

Yet, how often in society, otherwise respectable, are we pained with narrations in which prejudice warps, and self-love binds! How often do we see, that withholding part of a truth answers the worst ends of a falsehood! How often regret the unfair turn given to a cause, by placing a sentiment in one point of view, which the speaker had used in another! the letter of

truth preserved where its spirit is violated! a superstitious exactness scrupulously maintained in the under parts of a detail, in order to impress such an idea of integrity as shall gain credit for the *misrepresenter*, while he is designedly mistaking the leading principle. How may we observe a new character given to a fact by a different look, tone, or emphasis, which alters it as much as words could have done! the false impression of a sermon conveyed, when we do not like the preacher, or when through him we wish to make religion itself ridiculous! the care to avoid literal untruths, while the mischief is better effected by the unfair quotation of a passage divested of its context; the bringing together detached portions of a subject, and making those parts ludicrous, when connected, which were serious in their distinct position! the insidious use made of a sentiment by representing it as the *opinion* of him who had only brought it forward in order to expose it! the relating opinions which had merely been put hypothetically, as if they were the avowed principles of him we would discredit! that subtle falsehood which is so made to incorporate with a certain quantity of truth, that the most skilful moral chemists cannot analyse or separate them! for a good *misrepresenter* knows that a successful lie must have a certain infusion of truth, or it will not go down. And this amalgamation is the test of his skill; as too *much* truth would defeat the end of his mischief; and too *little* would destroy the belief of the hearer. All that indefinable ambiguity and equivocation; all that prudent deceit, which is rather implied than expressed; those more delicate artifices of the school of Loyola and of Chesterfield, which allow us when we dare not deny a truth, yet so to disguise and discolour it, that the truth we relate shall not resemble the truth we heard! These and all the thousand shades of simulation and dissimulation will be carefully guarded against in the conversation of vigilant Christians.

Again, it is surprising to mark the common deviations from strict veracity which spring, not from enmity to truth, not from intentional deceit, not from malevolence or envy, not from the least design to injure; but from mere levity, habitual inattention, and a current notion that it is not worth while to be correct in small things. But here the doctrine of habits comes in with great force, and in that view no error is small. The cure of this disease in its more inveterate stages being next to impossible, its prevention ought to be one of the earliest objects of education.*

Some women indulge themselves in sharp raillery, unfeeling wit, and cutting sarcasms, from the consciousness, it is to be feared, that they are secure from the danger of being called to account; this license of speech being encouraged by the very circumstance which ought to suppress it. To be severe, because they can be so with impunity, is a most ungenerous reason. It is taking a base and dishonourable advantage of their sex, the weakness of which, instead of tempting them to commit offences because they can commit them with safety, ought rather to make them more scrupulously careful to avoid indiscretions for which no reparation can be demanded. What can be said for those who carelessly involve the injured party in consequences from which they know themselves exempted, and whose very sense of their own security leads them to be indifferent to the security of others!

The grievous fault of gross and obvious detraction which infects conversation, has been so heavily and so justly condemned by divines and moralists, that the subject, copious as it is, is exhausted. But there is an error of an opposite complexion, which we have before noticed, and against which the peculiar temper of the times requires that young ladies of a better cast should be guarded. From the narrowness of their own sphere of observation, they are sometimes addicted to accuse of uncharitableness, that distinguishing judgment which, resulting from a sound penetration and a zeal for truth, forbids persons of a very correct principle to be indiscriminately prodigal of commendation without inquiry and without distinction. There is an affectation of candour, which is almost as mischievous as calumny itself; nay, if it be less injurious in its individual application, it is perhaps, more alarming in its general principle, as it lays waste the strong fences which separate good from evil. They know, as a general principle (though they sometimes calumniate) that calumny is wrong; but they have not been told that flattery is wrong also; and youth, being apt to fancy that the direct contrary to wrong must necessarily be right, are apt to be driven into violent extremes. The dread of being only suspected of one fault, makes them actually guilty of the opposite; and to avoid the charge of harshness or of envy, they plunge into insincerity and falsehood. In this they are actuated either by an unsound judgment which does not see what is right, or an unsound principle which prefers what is wrong. Some also commend to conceal envy; and others are compassionate to indulge superiority.

In this age of high-minded independence when our youth are apt to set up for themselves, and every man is too much disposed to be his own legislator without looking to the established law of the land as his standard; and to set up for his own divine, without looking to the revealed will of God as his rule—by a candour equally vicious with our vanity, we are also complaisantly led to *give* the latitude we *take:* and it is become too frequent a practice in our *tolerating* young ladies, when speaking of their more erring and misled acquaintance, to offer for them this flimsy vindication, 'that what they do is right if it appear right to *them*:'—'if *they* see the thing in that light, and act up to it with sincerity, they cannot be materially wrong.' But the standard of truth, justice, and religion, must neither be elevated nor depressed, in order to accommodate it to actual circumstances; it must never be lowered to palliate error, to justify folly, or to vindicate vice. Good natured young people often speak favourably of unworthy, or extravagantly of common characters, from one of these motives; either their own views of excellence are low, or they speak respectfully of the undeserving, to purchase for themselves the re

* See the chapter on the use of definitions.

putation of tenderness and generosity; or they lavish unsparing praise on almost all alike, in the usurious hope of buying back universal commendation in return; or in those captivating characters in which the simple and masculine language of truth is sacrificed to the jargon of affected softness; and in which smooth and pliant manners are substituted for intrinsic worth, the inexperienced are too apt to *suppose* virtues, and to *forgive* vices. But they should carefully guard against the error of making *manner* the criterion of merit, and of giving unlimited credit to strangers for possessing every perfection, only because they bring into company the engaging exterior of urbanity and alluring gentleness. They should also remember that it is an easy, but not an honest way of obtaining the praise of candour, to get into the soft and popular habit of saying of all their acquaintance, when speaking of them, that *they are so good!* True Christian candour conceals faults, but it does not invent virtues. It tenderly forbears to expose the evil which may belong to a character, but it dares not ascribe to it the good which does not exist. To correct this propensity to false judgment and insincerity, it would be well to bear in mind, that while every good action, come from what source it may, and every good quality, be it found in whomsoever it will, deserves its fair proportion of distinct and willing commendation; yet no character is GOOD, in the true sense of the word, which is not RELIGIOUS.

In fine—to recapitulate what has been said, with some additional hints:—Study to promote both intellectual and moral improvement in conversation; labour to bring into it a disposition to bear with others, and to be watchful over yourself; keep out of sight any prominent talent of your own, which, if indulged, might discourage or oppress the feeble minded; and try to bring their modest virtues into notice. If you know any one present to possess any particular weakness or infirmity, never exercise your wit by maliciously inventing occasions which may lead her to expose or betray it; but give as favourable a turn as you can to the follies which appear, and kindly help her to keep the rest out of sight. Never gratify your own humour, by hazarding what you suspect may wound any one present in their persons, connexions, professions in life, or religious opinions; and do not forget to examine whether the laugh your wit has raised be never bought at this expense. Give credit to those who, without your kindness, will get none; do not talk *at* any one whom you dare not talk *to*, unless from motives in which the golden rule will bear you out. Seek neither to shine nor to triumph; and if you seek to please, take care that it be in order to convert the influence you may gain by pleasing to the good of others. Cultivate true politeness, for it grows out of true principle, and is consistent with the Gospel of Christ; but avoid those feigned attentions which are not stimulated by good will, and those stated professions of fondness which are not dictated by esteem. Remember that the pleasure of being thought *amiable* by strangers may be too dearly purchased, if it be purchased at the expense of truth and simplicity, remember that simplicity is the first charm in manner as truth is in mind; and could truth make herself visible, she would appear invested in simplicity.

Remember also that true Christian good nature is the soul, of which politeness is only the garb. It is not that artificial quality which is taken up by many when they go into society, in order to charm those whom it is not their particular business to please; and is laid down when they return home to those to whom to appear amiable is a real duty. It is not that fascinating but deceitful softness, which, after having acted over a hundred scenes of the most lively sympathy and tender interest with every slight acquaintance; after having exhausted every phrase of feeling, for the trivial sicknesses or petty sorrows of multitudes who are scarcely known, leaves it doubtful whether a grain of real feeling or genuine sympathy be reserved for the dearest connexions; and which dismisses a woman to her immediate friends with little affection, and to her own family with little attachment.

True good-nature, that which alone deserves the name, is not a holyday ornament, but an every-day habit. It does not consist in servile complaisance, or dishonest flattery, or affected sympathy, or unqualified assent, or unwarrantable compliance, or eternal smiles. Before it can be allowed to rank with the virtues, it must be wrought up from a humour into a principle, from an occasional disposition into a habit. It must be the result of an equal aud well-governed mind, not the start of casual gayety, the trick of designing vanity, or the whim of capricious fondness. It is compounded of kindness, forbearance, forgiveness, and self-denial; 'it seeketh not its own,' but is capable of making continual sacrifices of its own tastes, humours, and self-love; yet knows that among the sacrifices it makes, it must never include its integrity. Politeness on the one hand, and insensibility on the other, assume its name, and wear its honours; but they assume the honours of a triumph, without the merit of a victory; for politeness subdues nothing, and insensibility has nothing to subdue. Good-nature of the true cast, and under the foregoing regulations, is above all price in the common intercourse of domestic society; for an ordinary quality, which is constantly brought into action by the perpetually recurring through minute events of daily life, is of higher value than more brilliant qualities which are less frequently called into use; as small pieces of ordinary current coin are of more importance in the commerce of the world than the medals of the antiquary. And, indeed, Christianity has given that new turn to the character of all the virtues, that perhaps it is the best test of the excellence of many that they have little brilliancy in them.—The Christian religion has degraded some splendid qualities from the rank they held, and elevated those which were obscure into distinction.

CHAP. XVI.

On the danger of an ill-directed Sensibility.

IN considering the human mind with a view

to its improvement, it is prudent to endeavour to discover the natural bent of the individual character: and having found it, to direct your force against that side on which the warp lies, that you may lessen by counteraction the defect which you might be promoting, by applying your aid in a contrary direction. But the misfortune is, people who mean better than they judge are apt to take up a set of general rules, good perhaps in themselves, and originally gleaned from experience and observation on the nature of human things, but not applicable in all cases. These rules they keep by them as nostrums of universal efficacy, which they therefore often bring out for use in cases to which they do not apply. For to make any remedy effectual, it is not enough to know the medicine, you must study the constitution also; if there be not a congruity between the two, you may be injuring one patient by the means which are requisite to raise and restore another.

In forming the female character it is of importance that those on whom the task devolves should possess so much penetration as accurately to discern the degree of sensibility, and so much judgment as to accommodate the treatment to the individual character. By constantly stimulating and extolling feelings naturally quick, those feelings will be rendered too acute and irritable. On the other hand, a calm and equable temper will become obtuse by the total want of excitement: the former treatment converts the feelings into a source of error, agitation, and calamity; the latter starves their native energy, deadens the affections and produces a cold, dull, selfish spirit; for the human mind is an instrument which will lose its sweetness if strained too high, and will be deprived of its tone and strength if not sufficiently raised.

It is cruel to chill the precious sensibility of an ingenuous soul, by treating with supercilious coldness and unfeeling ridicule every indication of a warm, tender, disinterested, and enthusiastic spirit, as if it exhibited symptoms of a deficiency in understanding or in prudence. How many are apt to intimate, with a smile of mingled pity and contempt, in considering such a character, that when she knows the world, that is, in other words, when she shall be grown cunning, selfish, and suspicious, she will be ashamed of her present glow of honest warmth, and of her lovely susceptibility of heart. May she never know the world, if the knowledge of it must be acquired at such an expense! But to sensible hearts, every indication of genuine feeling will be dear, for they well know that it is this temper which, by the guidance of the Divine Spirit, may make her one day become more enamoured of the beauty of holiness; which, with the co-operation of principle, and under its direction will render her the lively agent of Providence in diminishing the misery that is in the world; into which misery this temper will give her a quicker intuition than colder characters possess. It is this temper which, when it is touched and purified by a 'live coal from the altar,'* will give her a keener taste for the spirit of religion, and a quicker zeal in discharging its duties. But let it be remembered likewise, that as there is no quality in the female character which more raises its tone, so there is none which will be so likely to endanger the peace, and to expose the virtue of the possessor; none which requires to have its luxuriances more carefully watched, and its wild shoots more closely lopped.

For young women of affections naturally warm but not carefully disciplined, are in danger of incurring an unnatural irritability; and while their happiness falls a victim to the excess of uncontrolled feelings, they are liable at the same time to indulge a vanity of all others the most preposterous, that of being vain of their very defect. They have heard sensibility highly commended, without having heard any thing of those bounds and fences which were intended to confine it, and without having been imbued with that principle which would have given it a beneficial direction. Conscious that they possess the quality itself in the extreme, and not aware that they want all that makes that quality safe and delightful, they plunge headlong into those sins and miseries from which they conceitedly and ignorantly imagine, that not principle, but coldness, has preserved the more sober-minded and well-instructed of their sex.

As it would be foreign to the present design to expatiate on those criminal excesses which are some of the sad effects of ungoverned passion, it is only intended here to hazard a few remarks on those lighter consequences of it which consist in the loss of comfort without ruin of character, and occasion the privation of much of the happiness of life without involving any very censurable degree of guilt or discredit. It may, however, be incidentally remarked, and let it be carefully remembered, that if no women have risen so high in the scale of moral excellence as those whose natural warmth has been conscientiously governed by its true guide, and directed to its true end; so none have furnished such deplorable instances of extreme depravity as those who, through the ignorance or the dereliction of principle, have been abandoned by the excess of this very temper to the violence of ungoverned passions and uncontrolled inclinations. Perhaps, if we were to inquire into the remote cause of some of the blackest crimes which stain the annals of mankind, profligacy, murder, and especially suicide, we might trace them back to this original principle, an ungoverned sensibility.

Notwithstanding all the fine theories in prose and verse to which this topic has given birth, it will be found that very exquisite sensibility contributes so little to *happiness*, and may yet be made to contribute so much to *usefulness*, that it may perhaps be generally considered as bestowed for an exercise to the possessor's own virtue, and at the same time, as a keen instrument with which he may better work for the good of others.

Women of this cast of mind are less careful to avoid the charge of unbounded extremes, than to escape at all events the imputation of insensibility. They are little alarmed at the danger of *exceeding*, though terrified at the suspicion

* Isaiah, vi. 6.

of *coming short*, of what they take to be the extreme point of feeling. They will even resolve to prove the warmth of their sensibility, though at the expense of their judgment, and sometimes also of their justice. Even when they earnestly desire to *be* and to *do* good, they are apt to employ the wrong instrument to accomplish the right end. They employ the passions to do the work of the judgment; forgetting, or not knowing, that the passions were not given us to be used in the search and discovery of truth, which is the office of a cooler and more discriminating faculty; but to animate us to warmer zeal in the pursuit and practice of truth, when the judgment shall have pointed out what *is* truth.

Through this natural warmth, which they have been justly told is so pleasing, but which perhaps, they have not been told will be continually exposing them to peril and to suffering, their joys and sorrows are excessive. Of this extreme irritability, as was before remarked, the ill-educated learn to boast as if it were a decided indication of superiority of soul, instead of labouring to restrain it as the excess of a temper which ceases to be amiable when it is no longer under the control of the governing faculty. It is misfortune enough to be born more liable to suffer and to sin, from this conformation of mind, it is too much to nourish the evil by unrestrained indulgence; it is still worse to be proud of so misleading a quality.

Flippancy, impetuosity, resentment, and violence of spirit, grow out of this disposition, which will be rather promoted than corrected, by the system of education, on which we have been animadverting; in which system emotions are too early and too much excited, and tastes and feelings are considered as too exclusively making up the whole of the female character; in which the judgment is little exercised, the reasoning powers are seldom brought into action, and self-knowledge and self-denial scarcely included.

The propensity of mind which we are considering, if unchecked, lays its possessors open to unjust prepossessions, and exposes them to all the danger of unfounded attachments. In early youth, not only love at first sight, but also friendship of the same instantaneous growth, springs up from an ill-directed sensibility, and in after-life, women under the powerful influence of this temper, conscious that they have much to be borne with, are too readily inclined to select for their confidential connexions, flexible and flattering companions, who will indulge and perhaps admire her faults, rather than firm and honest friends, who will reprove and would assist in curing them. We may adopt it as a general maxim, that an obliging, weak, yielding, complaisant friend, full of small attentions, with little religion, little judgment, and much natural acquiescence and civility, is a most dangerous, though generally a too much desired confidante: she soothes the indolence, and gratifies the vanity of her friend, by reconciling her to her faults, while she neither keeps the understanding nor the virtues of that friend in exercise; but withholds from her every useful truth, which by opening her eyes might give her pain. These obsequious qualities are the 'soft green,'* on which the soul loves to repose itself.—But it is not a refreshing or a wholesome repose; we should not select, for the sake of present ease, a soothing flatterer, who will lull us into a pleasing oblivion of our failings, but a friend who, valuing our soul's health above our immediate comfort, will rouse us from torpid indulgence, to animation, vigilance, and virtue.

An ill-directed sensibility also leads a woman to be injudicious and eccentric in her *charities;* she will be in danger of proportioning her bounty to the immediate effect which the distressed object produces on her senses; and will therefore be more liberal to a small distress presenting itself to her own eyes, than to the more pressing wants and better claims of those miseries of which she only hears the relation. There is a sort of stage effect which some people require for their charities; and such a character as we are considering, will be apt also to desire, that the object of her compassion shall have something interesting and amiable in it, such as shall furnish pleasing images and lively pictures to her imagination, that in her charities as well as in every thing else, and engaging subjects for description; forgetting she is to be a 'follower of Him who pleased not himself:' forgetting that the most coarse and disgusting object may be as much the representative of Him, who said, 'Inasmuch as ye do it to one of the least of these ye do it unto me,' as the most interesting. Nay, the more uninviting and repulsive cases may be better tests of the principle on which we relieve, than those which abound in pathos and interest, as we can have less suspicion of our motive in the latter case than in the former. But while we ought to neglect neither of these supposed cases, yet the less our feelings are caught by pleasing circumstances, the less will be the danger of our indulging self-complacency, and the more likely shall we be to do what we do for the sake of Him who has taught us, that no deeds but what are performed on that principle 'shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.'

But through the want of that governing principle which should direct her sensibility, a tender-hearted woman, whose hand, if she be actually surrounded with scenes and circumstances to call it into action, is

> Open as day to melting charity;

nevertheless may utterly fail in the great and comprehensive duty of Christian love, for she has feelings which are acted upon solely by local circumstances and present events. Only remove her into another scene, distant from the wants she has been relieving; place her in the lap of indulgence, so entrenched with ease and pleasure, so immersed in the softness of life, that distress no longer finds any access to her presence, but through the faint and dull medium of a distant representation; remove her from the sight and sound of that misery, which, when present, so tenderly affected her—she now forgets that misery exists; as she hears but little, and sees nothing of want and sorrow, she is

* Burke's 'Sublime and Beautiful.'

ready to fancy that the world is grown happier than it was: in the meantime, with a quiet conscience and a thoughtless vanity, she has been lavishing on superfluities that money, which she would cheerfully have given to a charitable case, had she not forgotten that any such were in existence, because *pleasure* had blocked up the avenues through which misery used to find its way to her heart; and now, when again such a case enforces itself into her presence, she laments with real sincerity that the money is gone which should have relieved it.

In the mean time, perhaps, other women of less natural sympathy, but whose sympathies are under better regulation, or who act from a principle which requires little stimulus, have, by an habitual course of self-denial, by a constant determination to refuse themselves unnecessary indulgences, and by guarding against that dissolving PLEASURE which melts down the firmest virtue that allows itself to bask in its beams, have been quietly furnishing a regular provision for miseries, which their knowledge of the state of the world teaches them are every where to be found, and which their obedience to the will of God tells them it is their duty both to find out and relieve; a general expectation of being liable to be called upon for acts of charity, will lead the conscientiously charitable always to be prepared.

On such a mind as we have been describing, *Novelty* also will operate with peculiar force, and in nothing more than in the article of charity. Old established institutions, whose continued existence must depend on the continued bounty of that affluence to which they owed their origin, will be sometimes neglected, as presenting no variety to the imagination, as having by their uniformity ceased to be interesting; there is now a total failure of those springs of more sensitive feeling which set the charity a-going, and those sudden emotions of tenderness and gusts of pity, which once were felt, must now be excited by newer forms of distress. As age comes on, that charity which has been the effect of mere feeling, grows cold and rigid: this hardness is also increased by the frequent disappointments charity has experienced in its too high expectations of the gratitude and subsequent merit of those it has relieved; and by withdrawing its bounty, because some of its objects have been undeserving, it gives clear proof that what it bestowed was for its own gratification; and now finding that self-complacency at an end, it bestows no longer. Probably too the cause of so much disappointment may have been, that ill choice of the objects to which feeling, rather than a discriminating judgment, has led. The summer showers of mere sensibility soon dry up, while the living spring of Christian charity flows alike in all seasons.

The impatience, levity, and fickleness, of which women have been somewhat too generally accused, are perhaps in no small degree aggravated by the littleness and frivolousness of female pursuits. The sort of education they commonly receive, teaches girls to set a great price on small things.—Besides this, they do not always learn to keep a very correct scale of degrees for rating the value of the objects of their admiration and attachment; but by a kind of unconscious idolatry, they rather make a merit of loving *supremely* things and persons which ought to be loved with moderation and in a subordinate degree the one to the other. Unfortunately, they consider moderation as so necessarily indicating a cold heart, and narrow soul, and they look upon a state of indifference with so much horror, that either to love or hate with energy is supposed by them to proceed from a higher state of mind than is possessed by more steady and equable characters. Whereas it is in fact the criterion of a warm but well-directed sensibility, that while it is capable of loving with energy, it must be enabled, by the judgment which governs it, to suit and adjust its degree of interest to the nature and excellence of the object about which it is interested; for unreasonable prepossession, disproportionate attachment, and capricious or precarious fondness, is not sensibility.

Excessive but unintentional *flattery* is another fault into which a strong sensibility is in danger of leading its possessor. A tender heart and a warm imagination conspire to throw a sort of radiance round the object of their love, till they are dazzled by a brightness of their own creating. The worldly and fashionable borrow the warm language of sensibility without having the really warm feeling; and young ladies get such a habit of saying, and especially of writing such over-obliging and flattering things to each other, that this mutual politeness, aided by the self-love so natural to us all, and by an unwillingness to search into our own hearts, keeps up the illusion, and we acquire a habit of taking our character from the good we *hear* of ourselves, which others assume, but do not very well know, rather than from the evil we *feel* in ourselves, and which we therefore ought to be too thoroughly acquainted with to take our opinion of ourselves from what we hear from others.

Ungoverned sensibility is apt to give a wrong direction to its anxieties; and its affection often falls short of the true end of friendship. If the object of its regard happen to be sick, what inquiries! what prescription! what an accumulation is made of cases in which the remedy its fondness suggests has been successful! What an unaffected tenderness for the perishing body! Yet is this sensibility equally alive to the immortal interests of the sufferer? Is it not silent and at ease when it contemplates the dearest friend persisting in opinions essentially dangerous; in practices unquestionably wrong? Does it not view all this, not only without a generous ardour to point out the peril, and rescue the friend; but if that friend be supposed to be dying, does it not even make it the *criterion* of kindness to let her die, undeceived as to her true state? What a want of real sensibility, to feel for the pain but not for the danger of those we love? Now see what sort of sensibility the Bible teaches? 'Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, but thou shalt in any wise rebuke him, and shalt not suffer sin upon him.'* But let that tenderness which shrinks from the idea of exposing what it loves to a momentary pang,

* Leviticus, xix. 17.

figure to itself the bare possibibility, that the object of its own fond affection may not be the object of Divine favour! Let it shrink from the bare conjecture, that 'the familiar friend with whom it has taken sweet counsel,' is going down to the gates of death, unrepenting, unprepared and yet unwarned!

But mere human sensibility goes a shorter way to work. Not being able to give its friend the pain of hearing her faults or of knowing her danger, it works itself up into the quieting delusion that no danger exists, at least not for the objects of its own affection; it gratifies itself by inventing a salvation so comprehensive as shall take in all itself loves with all their faults; it creates to its own fond heart an ideal and exaggerated divine mercy, which shall pardon and receive all in whom this blind sensibility has an interest, whether they be good or whether they be evil.

In regard to its application to religious purposes, it is a test that sensibility has received its true direction when it is supremely turned to the love of God: for to possess an overflowing fondness for our fellow-creatures and fellow-sinners, and to be cold and insensible to the essence of goodness and perfection, is an inconsistency to which the feeling heart is awfully liable. God has himself the first claim to the sensibility he bestowed. 'He *first* loved us:' this is a *natural* cause of love. 'He loved us while we were sinners:' this is a *supernatural* cause. He continues to love us though we neglect his favours and slight his mercies: this would wear out any earthly kindness. He forgives us, not petty neglects, not occasional slights, but grievous sins, repeated offences, broken vows, and unrequited love. What human friendship performs offices so calculated to touch the soul of sensibility?

Those young women in whom feeling is indulged to the exclusion of reason and examination, are peculiarly liable to be the dupes of prejudice, rash decisions, and false judgment. The understanding having but little power over the will, their affections are not well poised, and their minds are kept in a state ready to be acted upon by the fluctuations of alternate impulses; by sudden and varying impressions; by casual and contradictory circumstances; and by emotions excited by every accident. Instead of being guided by the broad views of general truth, instead of having one fixed principle, they are driven on by the impetuosity of the moment. And this impetuosity blinds the judgment as much as it misleads the conduct; so that for want of a habit of cool investigation and inquiry, they meet every event without any previously formed opinion or settled rule of action. And as they do not accustom themselves to appreciate the real value of things, their attention is as likely to be led away by the under parts of a subject, as to seize on the leading feature. The same eagerness of mind which hinders the operation of the discriminating faculty leads also to the error of determining on the rectitude of an action by its success, and to that of making the event of an undertaking decide on its justice or propriety: it also leads to that superficial and erroneous way of judging which fastens on exceptions, if they make in our own favour, as grounds of reasoning, while they lead us to overlook received and general rules which tend to establish a doctrine contrary to our wishes.

Open-hearted, indiscreet girls, often pick up a few strong notions, which are as false in themselves as they are popular among the class in question: such as 'that warm friends must make warm enemies;'—that 'the generous love and hate with all their heart;' that 'a reformed rake makes the best husband;'—that 'there is no medium in marriage, but that it is a state of exquisite happiness or exquisite misery;' with many other doctrines of equal currency and equal soundness! These they consider as axioms, and adopt them as rules of life. From the two first of these oracular sayings, girls are in no small danger of becoming unjust through the very warmth of their hearts: for they will acquire a habit of making their estimate of the good or ill quality of others merely in proportion to the greater or less degree of kindness which they themselves have received from them. Their estimation of general character is thus formed on insulated and partial grounds; on the accidental circumstance of personal predilection or personal pique. Kindness to themselves or their friends involves all possible excellence; neglect, all imaginable defects. Friendship and gratitude can and should go a great way; but as they cannot convert vice into virtue, so they ought never to convert truth into falsehood. And it may be the more necessary to be upon our guard in this instance, because the very idea of gratitude may mislead us, by converting injustice into the semblance of a virtue. Warm expressions should therefore be limited to the conveying a sense of our own individual obligations which are real, rather than employed to give an impression of general excellence in the person who has obliged us, which may be imaginary. A good man is still good, though it may not have fallen in his way to oblige or serve *us*, nay, though he may have neglected, or even unintentionally hurt us: and sin is still sin, though committed by the person in the world to whom we are the most obliged, and whom we best love.

There is danger lest our excessive commendation of our friends, merely as such, may be derived from vanity as well as gratitude. While we only appear to be triumphing in the virtues of our friend, we may be guilty of self-complacency; the person so excellent is the person who distinguishes *us*, and we are too apt to insert into the general eulogium the distinction we ourselves have received from him who is himself so much distinguished by others.

With respect to that fatal and most indelicate, nay gross maxim, that a 'reformed rake makes the best husband,' (an aphorism to which the principles and happiness of so many young women have been sacrificed)—it goes upon the preposterous supposition, not only that effects do not follow causes, but that they oppose them; on the supposition, that habitual vice creates rectitude of character, and that sin produces happiness: thus flatly contradicting what the moral government of God uniformly exhibits in the course of human events; and what revelation so evidently and universally teaches.

For it should be observed that the reformation is generally, if not always supposed to be brought about by the all-conquering force of female charms. Let but a profligate young man have a point to carry by winning the affections of a vain and thoughtless girl; he will begin his attack upon her heart by undermining her religious principles, and artfully removing every impediment which might have obstructed her receiving the addresses of a man without character. And while he will lead her not to hear without ridicule the mention of that change of heart which Scripture teaches and experience proves, that the power of Divine grace can work on a vicious character; while he will teach her to sneer at a change which he would treat with contempt, because he denies the possibility of so strange and miraculous a conversion; yet he will not scruple to swear that the power of her beauty has worked a revolution in his own loose practices which is equally complete and instantaneous.

But supposing his reformation to be genuine, it would even then by no means involve the truth of her proposition, that past libertinism insures future felicity; yet many a weak girl, confirmed in this palatable doctrine by examples she has frequently admired of those surprising reformations so conveniently effected in the last scene of most of our comedies, has not scrupled to risk her earthly and eternal happiness with a man, who is not ashamed to ascribe to the influence of her beauty that power of changing the heart which he impiously denies to Omnipotence itself.

As to the last of those practical aphorisms, that 'there is no medium in marriage, but that it is a state of exquisite happiness or exquisite misery;' this, though not equally sinful, is equally delusive; for marriage is only one modification of human life, and human life is not commonly in itself a state of exquisite extremes; but is for the most part that mixed and moderate state, so naturally dreaded by those who set out with fancying this world a state of rapture; and so naturally expected by those who know it to be a state of probation and discipline. Marriage, therefore, is only one condition, and often the best condition, of that imperfect state of being which, though seldom very exquisite, is often very tolerable; and which may yield much comfort to those who do not look for constant transport. But unfortunately, those who find themselves disappointed of the unceasing raptures they had anticipated in marriage disdaining to sit down with so poor a provision as comfort, and scorning the acceptance of that moderate lot which Providence commonly bestows with a view to check despondency and to repress presumption, give themselves up to the other alternative; and, by abandoning their hearts to discontent, make to themselves that misery with which their fervid imagination had filled the opposite scale.

The truth is, these young ladies are very apt to pick up their opinions, less from the divines than the poets; and the poets, though it must be confessed they are some of the best embellishers of life, are not *quite* the safest conductors through it. In travelling through a wilderness, though we avail ourselves of the harmony of singing birds to render the grove delightful, yet we never think of following them as guides to conduct us through its labyrinths.

Those women in whom the natural defects of a warm temper have been strengthened by an education which fosters their faults, are very dexterous in availing themselves of a hint, when it favours a ruling inclination, sooths vanity, indulges indolence, or gratifies their love of power. They have heard so often from their favourite sentimental authors, and their more flattering male friends, 'that when nature denied them strength, she gave them fascinating graces in compensation; that their strength consists in their weakness;' and that 'they are endowed with arts of persuasion which supply the absence of force, and the place of reason;' that they may learn, in time, to pride themselves on that very weakness, and to become vain of their imperfections; till at length they begin to claim for their defects not only pardon, but admiration. Hence they acquire a habit of cherishing a species of feeling which, if not checked, terminates in excessive selfishness; they learn to produce their inability to bear contradiction as a proof of their tenderness; and to indulge in that sort of irritability in all that relates to themselves, which inevitably leads to the utter exclusion of all interest in the sufferings of others. Instead of exercising their sensibility in the wholesome duty of relieving distress and visiting scenes of sorrow that sensibility itself is pleaded as a reason for their not being able to endure sights of wo, and for shunning the distress it should be exerted in removing. That exquisite sense of feeling which God implanted in the heart as a stimulus to quicken us in relieving the miseries of others, is thus introverted, and learns to consider *self* not as the agent, but the object of compassion. Tenderness is made an excuse for being hard-hearted; and instead of drying the weeping eyes of others, this false delicacy reserves its selfish and ready tears for the more elegant and less expensive sorrows of the melting novel, or the pathetic tragedy.

When feeling stimulates only to self-indulgence; when the more exquisite affections of sympathy and pity evaporate in sentiment, instead of flowing out in active charity, and affording assistance, protection, or consolation to every species of distress within its reach, it is an evidence that the feeling is of a spurious kind; and instead of being nourished as an amiable tenderness, it should be subdued as a fond and base self-love.

That idleness, to whose cruel inroads many women of fortune are unhappily exposed, from not having been trained to consider wholesome occupation, vigorous exertion, and systematic employment, as making part of the indispensable duties and pleasures of life, lays them open to a thousand evils of this kind, from which the useful and the busy are exempted; and, perhaps, it would not be easy to find a more pitiable object than a woman with a great deal of time, and a great deal of money on her hands, who, never having been taught the conscientious use of either squanders both at random, or rather moulders both away, without plan, without principle, and without pleasure: all whose projects begin

and terminate in self; who considers the rest of the world only as they may be subservient to her gratification; and to whom it never occurred, that both her time and money were given for the gratification and good of others.

It is not much to the credit of the other sex, that they now and then lend themselves to the indulgence of this selfish spirit in their wives, and cherish by a kind of false fondness those faults which should be combatted by good sense and a reasonable counteraction; slothfully preferring a little false peace, the purchase of precarious quiet, and the popular reputation of good nature, to the higher duty of forming the mind, fixing the principles, and strengthening the character of her with whom they are connected. Perhaps too, a little vanity in the husband helps out his good nature; he secretly rewards himself for his sacrifice by the consciousness of his superiority; he feels a self-complacency in his patient condescension to her weakness, which tacitly flatters his own strength: and he is, as it were, paid for stooping, by the increased sense of his own tallness. Seeing also, perhaps, but little of other women, he is taught to believe that they are all pretty much alike, and that, as a man of sense, he must content himself with what he takes to be the common lot. Whereas, in truth, by his misplaced indulgence, he has rather *made* his own lot than *drawn* it; and thus, through an indolent despair in the husband of being able to effect any amendment by opposition, and through the want of that sound affection which labours to improve and exalt the character of its object; it happens, that many a helpless, fretful, and daudling wife acquires a more powerful ascendancy than the most discreet and amiable woman; and that the most absolute female tyranny is established by these sickly and capricious humours.

The poets again, who, to do them justice, are always ready to lend a helping hand when any mischief is to be done, have contributed their full share towards confirming these feminine follies: they have strengthened by adulatory maxims, sung in seducing strains, those faults which their talents and their influence should have been employed in correcting. By fair and youthful females, an argument, drawn from sound experience and real life, is commonly repelled by a stanza or a sonnet; and a couplet is considered as nearly of the same validity with a text. When ladies are complimented with being

Fine by defect, and delicately weak

is not a standard of feebleness held out to them, to which vanity will gladly resort, and to which softness and indolence can easily act up, or rather *act down*, if I may be allowed the expression?

When ladies are told by the same misleading, but to them, high authority, that 'smiles and tears are the irresistible arms with which nature has furnished the weak for conquering the strong,' will they not eagerly fly to this cheap and ready artillery, instead of labouring to furnish themselves with a reasonable mind, an equable temper, and a meek and quiet spirit?

Every animal is endowed by Providence with the peculiar powers adapted to its nature and its wants; while none, except the human, by grafting art on natural sagacity, injures or mars the gift. Spoilt women, who fancy there is something more *picquant* and alluring in the mutable graces of caprice, than in the monotonous smoothness of an even temper; and who also having heard much, as was observed before, about their 'amiable weakness,' learn to look about them for the best succedaneum to strength, the supposed absence of which, they sometimes endeavour to supply by artifice. By this engine the weakest woman frequently furnishes the converse to the famous reply of the French minister, who, when he was accused of governing the mind of that feeble queen, Mary de Medicis, by sorcery, replied, 'that the only sorcery he had used, was that influence which strong minds naturally have over weak ones.'

But though it be fair so to study the tempers, defects, and weaknesses of others, as to convert our knowledge of them to the promotion of their benefit and our own; and though it be making a lawful use of our penetration to avail ourselves of the faults of others for 'their good to edification;' yet all deviations from the straight line of truth and simplicity; every plot insidiously to turn influence to unfair account; all contrivances to extort from a bribed complaisance what reason and justice would refuse to our wishes; these are some of the operations of that lowest and most despicable engine, selfish cunning, by which *little minds sometimes govern great ones.*

And, unfortunately, women from their natural desire to please, and from their sometimes doubting by what means this grand end may be best effected, are in more danger of being led into dissimulation than men; for dissimulation is the result of weakness; it is the refuge of doubt and distrust, rather than of conscious strength, the dangers of which lie another way. Frankness, truth, and simplicity, therefore, as they are inexpressibly charming, so are they peculiarly commendable in women; and nobly evince that while the possessors of them wish to please (and why should they not wish it?) they disdain to have recourse to any thing but what is fair, and just, and honourable to effect it; that they scorn to attain the most desired end by any but the most lawful means. The beauty of simplicity is indeed so intimately felt and generally acknowledged by all who have a true taste for personal, moral, or intellectual beauty, that women of the deepest dissimulation often find their account in assuming an exterior the most foreign to their character, and exhibiting the most engaging *naivete*. It is curious to see how much *art* they put in practice in order to appear *natural;* and the deep *design* which is set at work to display *simplicity*. And, indeed, this feigned simplicity is the most mischievous, because the most engaging of all the Proteus forms which artifice can put on. For the most free and bold sentiments have been sometimes hazarded with fatal success under this unsuspected mask. And an innocent, quiet, indolent, artless manner, has been adopted as the most refined and unsuccessful accompaniment of senti

ments, ideas, and designs, neither artless, quiet, nor innocent.

CHAP. XVII.

On dissipation, and the modern habits of fashionable life.

PERHAPS the interests of true friendship, elegant conversation, mental improvement, social pleasure, maternal duty, and conjugal comfort, never received such a blow as when Fashion issued out that arbitrary and universal decree, that *every body must be acquainted with every body*; together with that consequent, authoritative, but rather inconvenient clause that *every body must also go every where every night.* The implicit and devout obedience paid to this law, is incompatible with the very being of friendship; for as the circle of acquaintance expands, and it will be continually expanding, the affections will be beaten out into such thin lamina, as to leave little solidity remaining. The heart which is continually exhausting itself in professions, grows cold and hard. The feelings of kindness diminish in proportion as the expression of it becomes more diffuse and indiscriminate. The very traces of 'simplicity and Godly sincerity,' in a delicate female, wear away imperceptibly by constant collision with the world at large. And perhaps no woman takes so little interest in the happiness of her real friends, as she whose affections are incessantly evaporating in universal civilities; as she who is saying fond and flattering things at random, to a circle of five hundred people every night.

The decline and fall of animated and instructive conversation, has been, in a good measure effected by this barbarous project of assembling *en masse.* An excellent prelate,* with whose friendship the author was long honoured, and who himself excelled in the art of conversation, used to remark, that a few years had brought about a great revolution in the manners of society; that it used to be the custom, previously to going into company, to think that something was to be communicated or received, taught or learnt; that the powers of the understanding were expected to be brought into exercise, and that it was therefore necessary to quicken the mind, by reading and thinking, for the share the individual might be expected to take in the general discourse; but that now, knowledge and taste, and wit, and erudition, seemed to be scarcely considered as necessary materials to be brought into the pleasurable commerce of the world; because now there was little chance of turning them to much account; and therefore, he who possessed them, and he who possessed them not, were nearly on a footing.

It is obvious also that multitudinous assemblies are so little favourable to that *cheerfulness* which it should seem to be their very end to promote, that if there were any chemical process by which the quantum of spirits, animal or intellectual, could be ascertained, the diminution would be found to have been inconceivably great, since the transformation of man and woman from a social to a gregarious animal.

But if it be true that friendship, society, and cheerfulness, have sustained so much injury by this change of manners, how much more pointedly does the remark apply to family happiness.

Notwithstanding the known fluctuation of manners, and the mutability of language, could it be foreseen when the apostle Paul exhorted 'married women to be keepers *at home*,' that the time would arrive when that very phrase would be selected to designate one of the most decided acts of dissipation? Could it be foreseen that when a fine lady should send out a notification that on such a night she shall be AT HOME, these two significant words (besides imitating the rarity of the thing) would present to the mind an image the most *undomestic* which language can convey? Could it be anticipated that the event of one lady's being *at home* could only be effected by the universal concurrence of all her acquaintance to be abroad? That so simple an act should require such complicated co-operation? And that the report that one person would be found in her own house, should operate with such an electric force as to empty the houses of all her friends?

My country readers, who may require to have it explained that these two magnetic words *at home*, now possess the powerful influence of drawing together every thing *fine* within the sphere of their attraction, may need also to be apprized, that the guests afterwards are not asked what was *said* by the company, but whether the *crowd* was prodigious; the rule for deciding on the merit of a fashionable society, not being by the taste or the spirit, but by the *score* and the *hundred.* The question of pleasure, like a parliamentary question, is now carried by numbers. And when two parties modish, like two parties political, are run one against another on the same night, the same kind of mortification attends the leader of a defeated minority, the same triumph attends the exulting carrier of superior numbers, in the one case as in the other. The scale of enjoyment is rated by the measure of fatigue, and the quantity of inconvenience furnishes the standard of gratification: the smallness of the dimensions to which each person is limited on account of the multitudes which must divide among them a certain given space, adds to the sum total of general delight; the aggregate of pleasure is produced by the proportion of individual suffering; and not till every guest feels herself in the state of a cat in an exhausted receiver, does the delighted hostess attain the consummation of that renown which is derived from such overflowing rooms as shall throw all her competitors at a disgraceful distance.

An eminent divine has said, that either 'perseverance in prayer will make a man leave off sinning, or a continuance in sin will make him leave off prayer.' This remark may be accommodated to those ladies who, while they are devoted to the enjoyments of the world, yet retain considerable solicitude for the instruction of their daughters. But if they are really in earnest to give them a christian education, they must themselves renounce a dissipated life. Or if

* The late Bishop Horne.

they resolve to pursue the chase of pleasure, they must renounce this prime duty. Contraries cannot unite. The moral nurture of a tall daughter can no more be administered by a mother whose time is absorbed by crowds abroad, than the physical nurture of her infant offspring can be supplied by her in a perpetual absence from home. And is not that a preposterous affection, which, after leading a mother to devote a few months to the inferior duty of furnishing aliment to the mere animal life, allows her to desert her post when the more important moral and intellectual cravings require sustenance? This great object is not to be effected with the shreds and parings rounded off from the circle of a dissipated life; but in order to its adequate execution, the mother should carry it on with the same spirit and perseverance at home, which the father thinks it necessary to be exerting abroad in his public duty or professional engagement.

The usual vindication (and in theory it has a plausible sound) which has been offered for the large portion of time spent by women in acquiring ornamental talents is, that they are calculated to make the possessor love home, and that they innocently fill up the hours of leisure. The plea has indeed so promising an appearance, that it is worth inquiring whether it be in fact true. Do we then, on fairly pursuing the inquiry, discover that those who have spent most time in such light acquisitions, are really remarkable for loving home, or staying quietly there? or that when there, they are sedulous in turning time to the best account? I speak not of that rational and respectable class of women, who, applying (as many of them do) these elegant talents to their true purpose, employ them to fill up the vacancies of better occupations, and to embellish the leisure of a life actively good. But do we *generally* see that even the most valuable and sober part of the reigning female acquisitions leads their possessor to scenes most favourable to the enjoyment of them? to scenes which we should naturally suppose she would seek, in order to the more effectual cultivation of such rational pleasures? To learn to endure, to enjoy, and to adorn solitude, seems to be one great end for bestowing accomplishments, instead of making them the motive for hurrying those who have acquired them into crowds, in order for their most effectual display.

Would not those delightful pursuits, botany and drawing, for instance, seem likely to court the fields, the woods, and gardens of the paternal seat, as more congenial to their nature, and more appropriate to their exercise, than barren watering places, destitute of a tree, or an herb, or a flower, and not affording an hour's interval from successive pleasures, to profit by the scene, even it abounded with the whole vegetable world, from the 'cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall.'

From the mention of watering places, may the author be allowed to suggest a few remarks on the evils which have arisen from the general conspiracy of the gay to usurp the regions of the sick; and from their converting the health-restoring fountains, meant as a refuge for disease, into the resorts of vanity for those who have no disease but idleness?

This inability of staying at home, as it is one of the most infallible, so it is one of the most dangerous symptoms of the reigning mania. It would be more tolerabl , did this epidemic malady break out only as formerly during the winter, or some one season.—Heretofore, the tenantry and the poor, the natural dependants on the rural mansions of the opulent, had some definite period to which they might joyfully look forward for the approach of those patrons, part of whose business in life it is to influence by their presence, to instruct by their example, to sooth by their kinkness, and to assist by their liberality, those whom Providence, in the distribution of human lots, has placed under their more immediate protection. Though it would be far from truth to assert, that dissipated people are never charitable, yet I will venture to say that dissipation is inconsistent with the *spirit* of charity. That affecting precept followed by so gracious a promise, 'Never turn away thy face from any poor man, and then the face of the Lord shall never be turned away from thee,' cannot literally mean that we should *give* to all, as then we should soon have nothing left to give: but it seems to intimate the habitual attention, the duty of inquiring out all cases of distress, in order to judge which are fit to be relieved; now for this inquiry, for this attention, for this sympathy, the dissipated have little taste, and less leisure.

Let a reasonable conjecture (for calculation would fail!) be made of how large a diminution of the general good has been effected in this single respect by causes which, though they do not seem important in themselves, yet make no inconsiderable part of the mischief arising from modern manners: and I speak now to persons who *intend* to be charitable: what a deduction will be made from the aggregate of charity by a circumstance apparently trifling, when we consider what would be the beneficial effects of that regular bounty which must almost unavoidably result from the evening walks of a great and benevolent family among the cottages of their own domain: the thousand little acts of comparatively unexpensive kindness which the *sight* of petty wants and difficulties would excite; wants, which will scarcely be felt in the relation; and which will probably be neither seen, nor felt, nor fairly represented, in their long absences, by an agent. And what is even almost more than the good done, is the habit of mind kept up in those who do it. Would not this habit, exercised on the Christian principle, that 'even a cup of cold water,' given upon *right motives*, shall not lose its reward; while the giving 'all their goods to feed the poor,' without the true *principle* of charity, shall profit them nothing; would not this habit, I say, and the inculcation of the spirit which produces it, be almost the best part of the education of daughters.*

* It would be a pleasant summer amusement for our young ladies of fortune, if they were to preside at such spinning feasts as are instituted at Nuneham for the promotion of virtue and industry in their own sex. Pleasurable anniversaries of this kind would serve to combine in the minds of the poor two ideas which ought

Transplant this wealthy and bountiful family periodically, to the frivolous and uninteresting bustle of the watering place; there it is not denied that frequent public and fashionable acts of charity may make a part (and it is well they do) of the business and amusement of the day; with this latter, indeed, they are sometimes good naturedly mixed up. But how shall we compare the regular systematical good these persons would be doing at their own home, with the light, and amusing, and bustling bounties of the public place? The illegal raffle at the toy-shop, may relieve, it is true, some distress; but this distress, though it may be real, and if real it ought to be relieved, is far less easily ascertained than the wants of the poor round a person's own neighbourhood, or the debts of a distressed tenant. How shall we compare the broad stream of bounty which should be flowing through, and refreshing whole districts; with the penurious current of the subscription breakfast for the needy musician, in which the price of the gift is taken out in the diversion, and in which pleasure dignifies itself with the name of bounty? How shall we compare the attention, and time, and zeal, which would otherwise, perhaps, be devoted to the village school, spent in hawking about benefit tickets for a broken player, while the kindness of the benefactress, perhaps, is rewarded by scenes in which her charity is not always repaid by the purity of the exhibition.

Far be it from the author to wish to check the full tide of charity wherever it is disposed to flow! Would she could multiply the already abundant streams, and behold every source purified! But in the public resorts there are many who are able and willing to give. In the sequestered, though populous village, there is, perhaps, only one affluent family: the distress which they do not *behold* will probably not be attended to: the distress which *they* do not relieve will probably not be relieved at all: the wrongs which *they* do not redress will go unredressed: the oppressed whom *they* do not rescue will sink under the tyranny of the oppressor.—Through their own rural domains too, charity runs in a clearer current, and is under less suspicion of being polluted by that muddy tincture which it is sometimes apt to contract in passing through the impure soil of the world.

But to return from this too long digression. The old standing objection formerly brought forward by the prejudices of the other sex, and too eagerly laid hold on as a shelter for indolence and ignorance by ours, was, that intellectual accomplishments too much absorbed the thoughts and affections, took women off from the necessary attention to domestic duties, and superinduced a contempt or neglect of whatever was useful. It is peculiarly the character of the present day to detect absurd opinions, and expose plausible theories by the simple and decisive answer of experiment; and it is presumed that this popular error, as well as others, is daily receiving the refutation of actual experience. For it cannot surely be maintained on ground that is any longer tenable, that acquirements truly rational are calculated to draw off the mind from real duties. Whatever removes prejudices, whatever stimulates industry, whatever rectifies the judgment, whatever corrects self-conceit, whatever purifies the taste, and raises the understanding, will be likely to contribute to moral excellence: to woman moral excellence is the grand object of education: and of moral excellence, domestic life is to woman the proper sphere.

Count over the list of females who have made shipwreck of their fame and virtue, and have furnished the most lamentable examples of the dereliction of family duties; and the number will not be found considerable who have been led astray by the pursuit of knowledge. And if a few deplorable instances of this kind be produced, it will commonly be found that there was little infusion in the minds of such women of that correcting principle without which all other knowledge only 'puffeth up.'

The time nightly expended in late female vigils is expended by the light of far other lamps than those which are fed by the student's oil: and if families *are* to be found who are neglected through too much study in the mistress, it will probably be proved to be Hoyle and not Homer, who has robbed her children of her time and affections. For one family which has been neglected by the mother's passion for books, an hundred have been deserted through her passion for play. The husband of a fashionable woman will not often find that the library is the apartment the expenses of which involve him in debt or disgrace. And for one literary slattern, who now manifests her indifference to her husband by the neglect of her person, there are scores of elegant spendthrifts who ruin theirs by excess of decoration.

May I digress a little while I remark, that I am far from asserting that literature has never filled women with vanity and self-conceit: the contrary is too obvious: and it happens in this as in other cases, that a few characters conspicuously absurd, have served to bring a whole order into ridicule. But I will assert, that in general those whom books are supposed to have spoiled, would have been spoiled in another way without them. She who is a vain pedant because she has read much, has probably that defect in her mind which would have made her a vain fool if she had read nothing. It is not her having more knowledge, but less sense, which makes her insufferable: and ignorance would have added little to her value, for it is not what she has, but what she wants, which makes her unpleasant. The truth, however, probably lies here, that while her understanding was improved, the tempers of her heart were neglected, and that in cultivating the fame of a *savante*, she lost the humility of a Christian. But these instances too furnish only a fresh argument for the *general* cultivation of the female mind. The wider diffusion of sound knowledge, would re

never to be separated, but which *they* are not very forward to unite—that the great wish is to make them *happy* as well as good. Occasional approximations of the rich and poor, for the purposes of relief and instruction, and annual meetings for the purpose of innocent pleasure, would do much towards wearing away discontent, and the conviction that the rich really take an interest in their comfort, would contribute to reconcile the lower class to that state in which it has pleased God to place them.

move that temptation to be vain which may be excited by its rarity.

From the union of an unfurnished mind and a cold heart there results a kind of necessity for dissipation. The very term gives an idea of mental imbecility. That which a working and fatigued mind requires is *relaxation;* it requires something to unbend itself; to slacken its efforts, to relieve it from its exertions; while amusement is the *business* of feeble minds, and is carried on with a length and seriousness incompatible with the refreshing idea of relaxation. There is scarcely any one thing which comes under the description of public amusement, which does not fill the space of three or four hours nightly. Is not that a large proportion of refreshment for a mind, which, generally speaking, has been kept so many hours together on the stretch in the morning, by business, by study, by devotion?

But while we would assert that a woman of a cultivated intellect is not driven by the same necessity as others into the giddy whirl of public resort; who but regrets that real cultivation does not *inevitably* preserve her from it? No wonder that inanity of character, that vacuity of mind, that torpid ignorance, should plunge into dissipation as their natural refuge; should seek to bury their insignificance in the crowd of pressing multitudes, and hope to escape analysis and detection in the undistinguished mass of mixed assemblies! *There* attrition rubs all bodies smooth, and makes all surfaces alike! thither superficial and external accomplishments naturally fly as to their proper scene of action; as to a field where competition in *such* perfections is in perpetual exercise; where the laurels of admiration are to be won; whence the trophies of vanity may be carried off triumphantly.

It would indeed be matter of little comparative regret, if this corrupt air were breathed only by those whose natural element it seems to be; but who can forbear lamenting that the power of fashion attracts into this impure and unwholesome atmosphere, minds also of a better make, of higher aims and ends, of more ethereal temper? that it attracts even those who, renouncing enjoyments for which they have a genuine taste, and which would make them really happy, neglect society they love and pursuits they admire, in order that they may *seem* happy and *be* fashionable in the chase of pleasures they despise, and in company they disapprove! But no correctness of taste, no depth of knowledge, will infallibly preserve a woman from this contagion, unless her heart be impressed with a deep Christian conviction that she is accountable for the application of time. Perhaps if there be any one principle which should more sedulously than another be worked into the youthful mind, it is the doctrine of particular as well as general responsibility.

The contagion of dissipated manners is so deep, so wide, and fatal, that if I were called upon to assign the predominant cause of the greater part of the misfortunes and corruptions of the great and gay in our days, I should not look for it principally in any obviously great or striking circumstance: not in the practice of notorious vices, not originally in the dereliction of Christian principle; but I should without hesitation ascribe it to a growing, regular, systematic *series* of amusements; to an incessant, boundless, and not very disreputable DISSIPATION. Other corruptions, though more formidable in appearance, are yet less fatal in some respects, because they leave us intervals to reflect on their turpitude, and spirit to lament their excesses: but dissipation is the more hopeless, as by engrossing almost the entire life, and enervating the whole moral and intellectual system, it leaves neither time for reflection, nor space for self-examination, nor temper for the cherishing of right affections, nor leisure for the operation on sound principles, nor interval for regret, nor vigour to resist temptation, nor energy to struggle for amendment.

The great master of the science of pleasure among the ancients, who reduced it into a system which he called the *chief good of man*, directed that there should be interval enough between the succession of delights to sharpen inclination; and accordingly instituted periodical days of abstinence; well knowing that gratification was best promoted by previous self-denial. But so little do our votaries of fashion understand the true nature of pleasure, that one amusement is allowed to overtake another without any interval, either for recollection of the past or preparation for the future. Even on their own selfish principle, therefore, nothing can be worse understood than this continuity of enjoyment: for to such a degree of labour is the pursuit carried, that the pleasures exhaust instead of exhilarating, and the recreations require to be rested from.

For, not to argue the question on the ground of religion, but merely on that of present enjoyment look abroad and see who are the people that complain of weariness, listlessness and dejection. You will not find them among the class of such as are overdone with work, but with pleasure. The natural and healthful fatigues of business may be recruited by simple and cheap gratifications: but a spirit worn down with the toils of amusement, requires pleasures, of poignancy, varied, multiplied, stimulating.

It has been observed by medical writers, that that sober excess in which many indulge, by eating and drinking a little too much at every day's dinner and every night's supper, more effectually undermines the health, than those more rare excesses by which others now and then break in upon a life of general sobriety. This illustration is not introduced with a design to recommend occasional deviations into gross vice, by way of a pious receipt for mending the morals; but merely to suggest that there is a probability that those who are sometimes driven by unresisted passion into irregularities which shock their cooler reason, are more liable to be roused to a sense of their danger, than persons whose perceptions of evil are blunted through a round of systematical unceasing and yet not scandalous dissipation. And when I affirm that this system of regular indulgence relaxes the soul, enslaves the heart, bewitches the senses, and thus disqualifies for pious thought or useful action, without having any thing in it so gross as to shock the conscience; and when I hazard an opinion that this state is more formidable, because less

alarming, than that which bears upon it a more determined character of evil, I no more mean to speak of the latter in slight and palliating terms, than I would intimate, because the sick sometimes recover from a fever, but seldom from a palsy, that a fever is therefore a safe or a healthy state.

But there seems to be an error in the first concoction, out of which the subsequent errors successively grow. First then, as has been observed before, the showy education of women tends chiefly to qualify them for the glare of public assemblies: secondly, they seem in many instances to be so educated, with a view to the greater probability of their being splendidly married; thirdly, it is alleged in vindication of those dissipated practices, that daughters can only be seen, and admirers, procured at balls, operas, and assemblies: and that therefore by a natural and necessary consequence, balls, operas, and assemblies must be followed up without intermission till the object be effected. For the accomplishment of this object it is that all this complicated machinery had been previously set a going, and kept in motion with an activity not at all slackened by the disordered state of the system; for some machines, instead of being stopped, go faster because the main spring is out of order; the only difference being that they go wrong, and so the increased rapidity adds only to the quantity of error.

It is also, as we have already remarked, an error to fancy that the love of pleasure exhausts itself by indulgence, and that the very young are chiefly addicted to it. The contrary appears to be true. The desire often grows with the pursuit in the same degree as motion is quickened by the continuance of the gravitating force.

First then it cannot be thought unfair to trace back the excessive fondness for amusement to that mode of education we have elsewhere reprobated. Few of the accomplishments, falsely so called, assist the developement of the faculties: they do not exercise the judgment, nor bring into action those powers which fit the heart and mind for the occupations of life; they do not prepare women to love home, to understand its occupations, to enliven its uniformity, to fulfil its duties, to multiply its comforts: they do not lead to that sort of experimental logic, if I may so speak, compounded of observation and reflection, which makes up the moral science of life and manners. Talents which have *display* for their object despise the narrow stage of home! they demand mankind for their spectators, and the world for their theatre.

While we cannot help shrinking a little from the idea of a delicate young creature, lovely in person, and engaging in mind and manners, sacrificing nightly at the public shrine of Fashion, at once the votary and the victim; we cannot help figuring to ourselves how much more interesting she would appear in the eyes of a man of sense and feeling, did he behold her in the more endearing situation of domestic life. And who can forbear wishing, that the good sense, good taste, and delicacy of the men had rather led them to prefer seeking companions for life in the almost sacred quiet of a virtuous home? *There* they might have had the means of seeing and admiring those amiable beings in the best point of view; *there* they might have been enabled to form a juster estimate of female worth, than is likely to be obtained in the scenes where such qualities and talents as might be expected to add to the stock of domestic comfort must necessarily be kept in the back ground, and where such only *can* be brought into view as are not particularly calculated to insure the certainty of home delights.

> O! did they keep their persons fresh and new,
> How would they pluck allegiance from men's hearts,
> And win by rareness!

But by what unaccountable infatuation is it that men too, even men of understanding, join in the confederacy against their own happiness, by looking for their home companions in the resorts of vanity? Why do not such men rise superior to the illusions of fashion? Why do they not uniformly seek her who is to preside in *their* families in the bosom of her own? in the practice of every domestic duty, in the exercise of every amiable virtue, in the exertion of every elegant accomplishment? those accomplishments of which we have been reprobating, not the possession, but the application? *there* they would find her exerting them to their true end; to enliven business, to animate retirement, to embellish the charming scene of family delights, to heighten the interesting pleasures of social intercourse, and rising in just gradation to their noblest object, to adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour.

If, indeed, women were mere outside, form and face only, and if *mind* made up no part of her composition, it would follow that a ball-room was quite as appropriate a place for choosing a wife, as an exhibition room for choosing a picture. But, inasmuch as women are not mere portraits, their value not being determinable by a glance of the eye, it follows that a different mode of appreciating their value, and a different place for viewing them antecedent to their being individually selected, is desirable. The two cases differ also in this, that if a man select a picture for himself from among all its exhibited competitors, and bring it to his own house, the picture being passive, he is able to *fix* it there: while the wife, picked up at a public place, and accustomed to incessant display, will not, it is probable, when brought home, stick so quietly to the spot where he fixes her, but will escape to the exhibition-room again, and continue to be displayed at every subsequent exhibition, just as if she were not become private property, and had never been definitely disposed of.

It is the novelty of a thing which astonishes us, and not its absurdity; objects may be so long kept before the eye that it begins no longer to observe them; or may be brought into such close contact with it, that it does not discern them. Long habit so reconciles us to almost any thing, that the grossest improprieties cease to strike us when they once make a part of the common course of action. This, by the way, is a strong reason for carefully sifting every opinion and every practice before we let them incorporate into the mass of our habits, for after that time they will be no more examined.—Would it not be accounted preposterous for a young

man to say he had fancied such a lady would dance a better minuet because he had seen her behave devoutly at church, and *therefore* had chosen her for his partner? and yet he is not thought at all absurd when he intimates that he chose a partner for life because he was pleased with her at a ball. Surely the place of choosing and the motives of choice, would be just as appropriate in one case as in the other, and the mistake, if the judgment failed, not *quite* so serious.

There is among the more elevated classes of society, a certain set of persons who are pleased exclusively to call themselves, and whom others by a sort of compelled courtesy are pleased to call, the *fine world.* This small detachment consider their situation with respect to the rest of mankind, just as the ancient Grecians did theirs, that is as the Grecians thought there were but two sorts of beings, and that all who were not Grecians were barbarians; so this *certain set* conceives of society as resolving itself into two distinct classes, the *fine world* and the *people;* to which last class they turn over all who do not belong to their little *coterie*, however high their rank, or fortune, or merit. Celebrity, in their estimation, is not bestowed by birth or talents, but by being connected with *them.* They have laws, immunities, privileges, and almost a language of their own; they form a kind of distinct *cast*, and with a sort of *esprit du corps* detach themselves from others, even in general society, by an affectation of distance and coldness; and only whisper and smile in their own little groups of the initiated: their confines are jealously guarded, and their privileges are incommunicable.

In this society a young man loses his natural character, which, whatever, it might have been originally, is melted down and cast into the one prevailing mould of fashion: all the strong, native, discriminating qualities of his mind being made to take one shape, one stamp, one superscription! However varied and distinct might have been the materials which nature threw into the crucible, plastic fashion takes care that they shall all be the same, or at least appear the same, when they come out of the mould. A young man in such an artificial state of society, accustomed to the voluptuous ease, refined luxuries, soft accommodations, obsequious attendance, and all the unrestrained indulgencies of a fashable club, is not to be expected after marriage to take very cordially to a home, unless very extraordinary exertions are made to amuse, to attach, and to interest him: and he is not likely to lend a very helping hand to the union, whose most laborious exertions have hitherto been little more than a selfish stratagem to reconcile health with pleasure. Excess of gratification has only served to make him irritable and exacting; it will of course be no part of his project to make sacrifices, he will expect to receive them: and what would appear incredible to the *Paladins* of gallant times, and the *Chevaliers Preux* of more heroic days, even in the necessary business of establishing himself for life, he sometimes is more disposed to expect attentions than to make advances.

Thus the indolent son of fashion, with a thousand fine, but dormant qualities, which a bad tone of manners forbids him to bring into exercise: with real energies which that tone does not allow him to discover, and an unreal apathy which it commands him to feign; with the heart of a hero, perhaps, if called into the field, affects at home the manners of a Sybarite; and he who, with a Roman, or what is more, with a British valour, would leap into the gulf at the call of public duty,

> Yet in the soft and piping time of peace,

when fashion has resumed her rights, would murmur if a rose leaf lay double under him.

The clubs above alluded to, as has been said, generate and cherish luxurious habits, from their perfect ease, undress, liberty, and inattention to the distinctions of rank; they promote a love of play, and in short, every temper and spirit which tends to *undomesticate;* and what adds to the mischief is, all this is attained at a cheap rate compared with what may be procured at home in the same style.

These indulgences, and this habit of mind, gratify so many passions, that a woman can never hope successfully to counteract the evil by supplying at home gratifications which are *of the same kind*, or which gratify the *same* habits. Now a passion for gratifying vanity, and a spirit of dissipation *is* a passion of the same kind; and therefore, though for a few weeks, a man who has chosen his wife in the public haunts, and this wife a woman made up of *accomplishments*, may, from the novelty of the connexion and of the scene, continue domestic; yet in a little time she will find that those passions, to which she has trusted for making pleasant the married life of her husband, will crave the still higher pleasures of the club; and while these are pursued, she will be consigned over to solitary evenings at home, or driven back to the old dissipations.

To conquer the passions for club gratifications, a woman must not strive to feed it with sufficient aliment of the same kind in her society, either at home or abroad; she must supplant and overcome it by a passion of a different nature, which Providence has kindly planted within us; I mean by inspiring him with the love of fire-side enjoyments. But to qualify herself for administering these she must cultivate her understanding, and her heart, and her temper, acquiring at the same time that modicum of accomplishments suited to his taste, which may qualify her for possessing, both for him and for herself, greater varieties of safe recreation.

One great cause of the want of attachment in these modish couples is, that by living in the world at large, they are not driven to depend on each other as the chief source of comfort. Now it is pretty clear, in spite of modern theories, that the very frame and being of societies, whether great or small, public or private, is jointed and glued together by dependence. Those attachments, which arise from, and are compacted by, a sense of mutual wants, mutual affection, mutual benefit, and mutual obligation, are the cement, which secure the union of the family as well as of the state.

Unfortunately, when two young persons of the above description marry, the union is some

times considered rather as the end than the beginning of an engagement; the attachment of each to the other is rather viewed as an object already completed, than as one which marriage is to confirm more closely. But the companion for life is not always chosen from the purest motive; she is selected, perhaps, because she is admired by other men, rather than because she possesses in an eminent degree those peculiar qualties which are likely to constitute the individual happiness of the man who chooses her. Vanity usurps the place of affection; and indolence swallows up the judgment. Not happiness, but some easy substitute for happiness is pursued; and a choice which may excite envy, rather than produce satisfaction, is adopted as the means of effecting it.

The pair, not *matched but joined*, set out separately with their independent and individual pursuits. Whether it made a part of their original plan or not, that they should be indispensably necessary to each other's comfort, the sense of this necessity, probably not very strong at first, rather diminishes than increases by time; they live so much in the world, and so little together, that to stand well with their *own set* continues the favourite project of each; while to stand well with each other is considered as an under part of the plot in the drama of life. Whereas, did they start in the conjugal race with the fixed idea that they were to look to each other for their chief worldly happiness, not only principle, but prudence, and even selfishness, would convince them of the necessity of sedulously cultivating each other's esteem and affection as the grand means of promoting that happiness. But vanity, and the desire of flattery and applause, still continue to operate. Even after the husband is brought to feel a perfect indifference for his wife, he still likes to see her decorated in a style which may serve to justify his choice. He encourages her to set off her person, not so much for his own gratification, as that his self-love may be flattered, by her continuing to attract the admiration of those whose opinion is the standard by which he measures his fame, and which fame is to stand him in the stead of happiness. Thus is she necessarily exposed to the two-fold temptation of being at once neglected by her husband, and exhibited as an object of attraction to other men. If she escape this complicated danger, she will be indebted for her preservation not to his prudence, but to her own principles.

In some of these modish marriages, instead of the decorous neatness, the pleasant intercourse, and the mutual warmth of communication of the once social dinner; the late and uninteresting meal is commonly hurried over by the languid and slovenly pair, that the one may have time to dress for his club, and the other for her party. And in these cold abstracted *tetes-a-tetes*, they often take as little pains to entertain each other, as if the one was precisely the only human being in the world in whose eyes the other did not feel it necessary to appear agreeable.

Now if these young, and perhaps really amiable persons could struggle against the imperious tyranny of fashion, and contrive to pass a little time together, so as to get acquainted with each other; and if each would live in the lively and conscientious exercise of those talents and attractions which they sometimes know how to produce on occasions not *quite* so justifiable; they would, I am persuaded, often find out each other to be very agreeable people. And both of them, delighted and delighting, receiving and bestowing happiness, would no longer be driven to the necessity of perpetually escaping from home as from the only scene which offers no possible materials for pleasure. The steady and growing attachment, improved by unbounded confidence and mutual interchange of sentiments; judgment ripening, and experience strengthening that esteem which taste and inclination first inspired; each party studying to promote the eternal as well as temporal happiness of the other; each correcting the errors, improving the principles and confirming the faith of the beloved object; this would enrich the feeling heart with gratifications which the insolvent world has not to bestow: such an heart would compare its interesting domestic scenes with the vapid pleasures of public resort, till it would fly to its own home, not from necessity but from taste; not from custom, but choice; not from duty, but delight.

It may seem a contradiction to have asserted, that beings of all ages, tempers and talents, should with such unremitting industry follow up any way of life, if they did not find some enjoyment in it: yet I appeal to the bosoms of these incessant hunters in the chase of pleasure, whether they are really happy. No:—in the full tide and torrent of diversion, in the full blaze of gayety and splendor,

> The heart, distrusting, asks if this be joy?

But there is an anxious restlessness excited by the pursuit, which, if not interesting, is bustling. There is the dread, and partly the discredit, of being suspected of having one hour unmortgaged, not only to successive, but contending engagements; this it is, and not the pleasure of the engagement itself, which is the object—There is an agitation in the arrangements which imposes itself on the vacant heart for happiness. There is a tumult kept up in the spirits which is a busy though treacherous substitute for comfort.—The multiplicity of solicitations sooths vanity. The very regret that they cannot be all accepted has its charms: for dignity is flattered because refusal implies importance, and pre-engagement intimates celebrity. Then there is the joy of being invited when others are neglected; the triumph of showing our less modish friend that we are going where she cannot come; and the feigned regret at being *obliged* to go, assumed before her who is half wild at being obliged to stay away.—There is the secret art of exciting envy in the very act of bespeaking compassion; and of challenging respect by representing their engagements as duties, oppressive indeed but indispensable.—These are some of the supplemental shifts for happiness with which Vanity contrives to feed her hungry followers, too eager to be nice.*

* The precaution which is taken against the possibility of being unengaged by the long interval between

In the succession of open houses, in which pleasure is to be started and pursued on any given night, the actual place is never taken into the account of enjoyment: the scene of which is always supposed to lie in any place where her votaries happen not to be. Pleasure has no present tense: but in the house which her pursuers have just quitted, and in the house to which they are just hastening, a stranger might conclude the slippery goddess had really fixed her throne, and that her worshippers considered the existing scene, which they seem compelled to suffer, but from which they are eager to escape, as really detaining them from some positive joy to which they are flying in the next crowd; till, if he met them there, he would find the component parts of each precisely the same. He would hear the same stated phrases interrupted, not answered, by the same stated replies, the unfinished sentence 'driven adverse to the winds,' by pressing multitudes; the same warm regret mutually exchanged by two *friends* (who had expressly denied to each other all the winter) that they had not met before; the same soft and smiling sorrow at being *torn away* from each other now; the same avowed anxiety to renew the meeting, with perhaps the same secret resolution to avoid it. He would hear described with the same pathetic earnestness the difficulties of getting into this house, and the dangers of getting out of the last! the perilous retreat of former nights, effected amidst the shock of chariots, and the clang of contending coachmen! a retreat indeed effected with a skill and peril little inferior to that of the *ten thousand*, and detailed with far juster triumph: for that which happened only once in a life to the Grecian hero, occurs to these British heroines every night. There is one point of resemblance, indeed, between them, in which the comparison fails; for the commander with a *mauvaise honte* at which a true female veteran would blush, is remarkable for never *naming himself*.

With 'mysterious reverence' I forbear to descant on those serious and interesting rites, for the more august and solemn celebration of which, Fashion nightly convenes these splendid myriads to her more sumptuous temples. Rites! which, when engaged in with due devotion, absorb the whole soul, and call every passion into exercise, except indeed those of love, and peace, and kindness, and gentleness. Inspiring rites! which stimulate fear, rouse hope, kindle zeal, quicken dulness, sharpen discernment, exercise memory, inflame curiosity! Rites! in short, in the due performance of which all the energies and attentions, all the powers and abilities, all the abstraction and exertion, all the diligence and devotedness, all the sacrifice of time, all the contempt of ease, all the neglect of sleep, all the oblivion of care, all the risks of fortune (half of which, if directed to their true objects, would change the very face of the world) all these are concentrated to one point; a point in which the wise and the weak, the learned and the ignorant, the fair and the frightful, the sprightly and the dull, the rich and the poor, the patrician and the plebian, meet in one common and uniform equality; an equality as religiously respected in these solemnities, in which all distinctions are levelled at a blow (and of which the very spirit therefore is democratical) as it is combatted in all other instances.

Behold four kings, in majesty rever'd,
With hoary whiskers and a forked beard
And four fair queens, whose hands sustain a flow'r,
The expressive emblem of their softer pow'r:
Four knaves in garbs succint, a trusty band,
Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand;
And party-colour'd troops, a shining train,
Drawn forth to combat on the velvet plain.*

the invitation and the period of its accomplishment, reminds us of what historians remark of the citizens of ancient Crotona, who used to send their invitations a year before the time, that the guests might prepare both their dress and their appetite for the visit.

* Rape of the Lock

CHAP. XVIII.

On public amusements.

It is not proposed to enter the long contested field of controversy as to the individual amusements which may be considered as safe and lawful for those women of the higher class who make a strict profession of Christianity. The judgment they will be likely to form for themselves on the subject, and the plan they will consequently adopt, will depend much on the clearness or obscurity of their religious views, and on the greater or less progress they have made in their Christian course. It is in their choice of amusements that you are able, in some measure to get acquainted with the real dispositions of mankind. In their *business*, in the leading employments of life, their path is in a good degree chalked out for them: there is in this respect a sort of general character; wherein the greater part, more or less, must coincide. But in their *pleasures* the choice is voluntary, the taste is self-directed, the propensity is independent; and of course the habitual state, the genuine bent and bias of the temper, are most likely to be seen in those pursuits which every person is at liberty to choose for himself.

When a truly religious principle shall have acquired such a degree of force as to produce that conscientious and habitual improvement of time before recommended, it will discover itself by an increasing indifference and even deadness to those pleasures which are interesting to the world at large. A woman under the predominating influence of such a principle, will begin to discover that the same thing which in itself is innocent may yet be comparatively wrong. She will begin to feel that there are many amusements and employments which, though they have nothing censurable in themselves, yet if they be allowed to intrench on hours which ought to be dedicated to still better purposes; or if they are protracted to an undue length; or above all, if by softening and relaxing her mind and dissipating her spirits, they so indispose her for better pursuits as to render subsequent duties a burden, they become in that case clearly wrong for her, whatever they may be for others. Now as temptations of this sort are the peculiar dangers of better kind of characters, the sacrifice of such little gratifications as may *have no great*

harm in them, come in among the daily calls to self-denial in a Christian.

The fine arts, for instance, polite literature, elegant society, these are among the lawful, and liberal, and becoming recreations of higher life; yet if even these be cultivated to the neglect or exclusion of severer duties; if they interfere with serious studies, or disqualify the mind for religious exercises, it is an intimation that they have been too much indulged, and under such circumstances, it might be the part of Christian circumspection to inquire if the time devoted to them ought not to be abridged. Above all, a tender conscience will never lose sight of one safe rule of determining in all doubtful cases: if the point be so nice that though we hope upon the whole there *may* be no harm in engaging in it, we may at least be always quite sure that there *can* be no harm in letting it alone. The adoption of this simple rule would put a period to much unprofitable casuistry.

The principle of being responsible for the use of time once fixed in the mind, the conscientious Christian will be making a continual progress in the great art of turning time to account. In the first stages of her religion she will have abstained from pleasures which began a *little* to wound the conscience, or which assumed a questionable shape; but she will probably have abstained with regret, and with a secret wish that conscience *could* have permitted her to keep well with pleasure and religion too. But you may discern in her subsequent course that she has reached a more advanced stage, by her beginning to neglect even such pleasures or employments as have no moral turpitude in them, but are merely what are called innocent. This relinquishment arises, not so much from her feeling still more the restraints of religion, as from the improvement in her religious taste. Pleasures cannot now attach her merely from being innocent, unless they are likewise interesting, and to be interesting they must be consonant to her superinduced views. She is not contented to spend a large portion of her time harmlessly, it must be spent profitably also. Nay, if she be indeed earnestly 'pressing towards the mark,' it will not be even enough for her that her present pursuit be good if she be convinced that it might be still better. Her contempt of ordinary enjoyments will increase in a direct proportion to her increased relish for those pleasures which religion enjoins and bestows. So that at length if it were possible to suppose that an angel could come down to take off as it were the interdict, and to invite her to resume all the pleasures she had renounced, and to resume them with complete impunity; she would reject the invitation, because, from an improvement in her spiritual taste, she would despise those delights from which she had at first abstained through fear. Till her will and affections come heartily to be engaged in the service of God, the progress will not be comfortable; but when once they are so engaged, the attachment to this service will be cordial, and her heart will not desire to go back and toil again in the drudgery of the world. For her religion has not so much given her a new creed, as a new heart, and a new life.

As her views are become new, so her tempers, dispositions, tastes, actions, pursuits, choice of company, choice of amusements, are new also; her employment of time is changed, her turn of conversation is altered; 'old things are passed away, all things are become new.' In dissipated and worldly society, she will seldom fail to feel a sort of uneasiness, which will produce one of these two effects; she will either, as proper seasons present themselves, struggle hard to introduce such subjects as may be useful to others, or, supposing that she finds herself unable to effect this, she will as far as she prudently can, absent herself from all unprofitable kind of society. Indeed her manner of conducting herself under these circumstances may serve to furnish her with a test of her own sincerity For while people are contending for a little more of this amusement, and pleading for a little extension of that gratification, and fighting in order that they may hedge in a little more territory to their pleasure ground, they are exhibiting a kind of evidence against themselves, that they are not yet 'renewed in the spirit of their mind.'

It has been warmly urged as an objection to certain religious books, and particularly against a recent work of high worth and celebrity, by a distinguished layman,* that they have set the standard of self-denial higher than reason or even than Christianity requires. The works do indeed elevate the general tone of religion to a higher pitch than is quite convenient to those who are at infinite pains to construct a comfortable and comprehensive plan which shall unite the questionable pleasures of this world with the promised happiness of the next. I say it has been sometimes objected, even by those readers who, on the whole, greatly admire the particular work alluded to, that it is unreasonably strict in the preceptive and prohibitory parts; and especially that it individually and specifically forbids certain fashionable amusements, with a severity not to be found in the Scriptures; and is scrupulously rigid in condemning diversions against which nothing is said in the New Testament. Each objector, however, is so far reasonable, as only to beg quarter for her own favourite diversion, and generously abandons the defence of those in which she herself has no particular pleasure.

But these objectors do not seem to understand the true genius of Christianity. They do not consider that it is the character of the gospel to exhibit a scheme of principles, of which it is the tendency to infuse such a spirit of holiness as must be utterly incompatible, not only with customs decidedly vicious, but with the very spirit of worldly pleasure. They do not consider that Christianity is neither a table of ethics, nor a system of opinions, nor a bundle of rods to punish, nor an exhibition of rewards to allure, nor a scheme of restraints to terrify, nor merely a code of laws to restrict; but it is a new principle infused into the heart by the word and the Spirit of God; out of which principle will inevitably grow right opinions, renewed affections, correct morals, pure desires, heavenly tempers, and holy habits, with an invariable desire of

* Practical View, &c. by Mr Wilberforce.

pleasing God, and a constant fear of offending him. A real Christian whose heart is thoroughly imbued with this principle, can no more return to the amusements of the world, than a philosopher can be refreshed with the diversions of the vulgar, or a man be amused with the recreations of a child. The New Testament is not a mere statute book: it is not a table where every offence is detailed, and its corresponding penalty annexed: it is not so much a *compilation*, as a *spirit* of laws: it does not so much prohibit every individual wrong practice, as suggest a temper and implant a general principle with which every wrong practice is incompatible. It did not, for instance, so much attack the then reigning and corrupt fashions, which were probably like the fashions of other countries, temporary and local, as it struck at the worldliness, which is the root and stock from which all corrupt fashions proceed.

The prophet Isaiah, who addressed himself more particularly to the Israelitish women, inveighed not only against vanity, luxury, and immodesty, in general; but with great propriety censured even those precise instances of each, to which the women of rank, in the particular country he was addressing, were especially addicted; nay, he enters into the minute detail* of their very personal decorations, and brings specific charges against several instances of their levity and extravagance of apparel; meaning, however, chiefly to censure the turn of character which these indicated. But the gospel of Christ, which was to be addressed to all ages, stations, and countries, seldom contains any such detailed animadversions; for though many of the censurable modes which the prophet so severely reprobated, continued probably to be still prevalent in Jerusalem in the days of our Saviour, yet how little would it have suited the universality of his mission, to have confined his preaching to such local, limited and fluctuating customs! not but there are many texts which actually *do* define the Christian conduct as well as temper, with sufficient particularity to serve as a condemnation of many practices which are pleaded for, and often to point pretty directly at them.

It would be well for those modish Christians who vindicate excessive vanity in dress, expense, and decoration, on the principle of their being mere matters of indifference, and no where prohibited in the gospel, to consider that such practices strongly mark the temper and spirit with which they are connected, and in that view are so little creditable to the Christian profession, as to furnish a just subject of suspicion against the piety of those who indulge in them.

Had Peter, on that memorable day when he added three thousand converts to the church by a single sermon, narrowed his subject to a remonstrance against this diversion, or that public place, or the other vain amusement, it might indeed have suited the case of some of the female Jewish converts who were present, but such restrictions as might have been appropriate to *them*, would probably not have applied to the cases of the Parthians and the Medes, of which his audience was partly composed or such as might have belonged to them, would have been totally inapplicable to the Cretes and Arabians; or again, those which suited these would not have applied to the Elamites and Mesapotamians. By such partial and circumscribed addresses, his multifarious audience, composed of all nations and countries, would not have been, as we are told they were, 'pricked to the heart.' But when he preached on the broad ground of general 'repentance and remission of sins in the name of Jesus Christ,' it was no wonder that they all cried out, 'What shall we do?' These collected foreigners, at their return home, must have found very different usages to be corrected in their different countries; of course a detailed restriction of the popular abuses at Jerusalem, would have been of little use to strangers returning to their respective nations. The ardent apostle, therefore, acted more consistently in communicating to them the large and comprehensive spirit of the gospel which should at once involve all their scattered and separate duties, as well as reprove all their scattered and separate corruptions, for the whole always includes a part, and the greater involves the less. Christ and his disciples, instead of limiting their condemnation to the peculiar vanities reprehended by Isaiah, embraced the very soul and principle of them all, in such exhortations as the following: 'Be ye not conformed to the world:'—'If a man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him:'—'The fashion of this world passeth away.' Our Lord and his apostles, whose future unselected audience was to be made up out of the various inhabitants of the whole world, attacked the evil *heart*, out of which all those incidental, local, peculiar, and popular corruptions proceeded.

In the time of Christ and his immediate followers, the luxury and intemperance of the Romans had arisen to a pitch before unknown in the world; but as the same gospel, which its Divine Author and his disciples were then preaching to the hungry and necessitous, was afterwards to be preached to high and low, not excepting the Roman emperors themselves; the large precept, 'Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God,' was likely to be of more general use, than any separate exhortation to temperance, to thankfulness, to moderation, as to quantity or expense; which last indeed must always be left in some degree to the judgment and circumstances of the individual.

When the apostle of the Gentiles visited the 'Saints of Cæsar's household,' he could hardly fail to have heard, nor could he have heard without abhorrence, of some of the fashionable amusements in the court of Nero. He must have reflected with peculiar indignation on many things which were practised in the Circensian games; yet, instead of pruning this corrupt tree, and singling out even the inhuman gladiatorial sports for the object of his condemnation, he laid his axe to the root of all corruption, by preaching to them that Gospel of Christ of which 'he was not ashamed,' and showing to them that believed, that 'it was the power of God and the wisdom of God.' Of this gospel the great object was, to attack not one popular

* Isaiah, chap. iii.

evil, but the whole body of sin. Now the doctrine of Christ crucified, was the most appropriate means for destroying this; for by what other means could the fervid imagination of the apostle have so powerfully enforced the heinousness of sin, as by insisting on the costliness of the sacrifice which was offered for its expiation? It is somewhat remarkable, that about the very time of his preaching to the Romans, the public taste had sunk to such an excess of depravity, that the very women engaged in those shocking encounters with the gladiators.

But in the first place, it was better that the right practice of his hearers should grow out of the right principle; and next, his specifically reprobating these diversions might have had this ill-effect, that succeeding ages, seeing that they in their amusements came somewhat short of those dreadful excesses of the polished Romans, would only have plumed themselves on their own comparative superiority; and on this principle, even the bull fights of Madrid might in time have had their panegyrists. The truth is, the apostle knew that such abominable corruptions could never subsist together with Christianity, and in fact the honour of abolishing these barbarous diversions, was reserved for Constantine, the first Christian emperor.

Besides, the apostles, by inveighing against some *particular* diversions might have seemed to sanction all which they did not actually censure: and as, in the lapse of time, and the revolution of governments, customs change and manners fluctuate, had a minute reprehension of the fashions of the then existing age been published in the New Testament, that portion of scripture must in time have become obsolete, even in that very same country, when the fashions themselves should have changed. Paul and his brother apostles knew that their epistles would be the oracles of the Christian world, when these temporary diversions would be forgotten. In consequence of this knowledge, by the universal precept to avoid 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life;' they have prepared a lasting antidote against the *principle* of all corrupt pleasures, which will ever remain equally applicable to the loose fashions of all ages, and of every country, to the end of the world.

Therefore, to vindicate diversions which are in themselves unchristian, on the pretended ground that they are not specifically condemned in the gospel, would be little less absurd than if the heroes of Newmarket should bring it as a proof that their periodical meetings are not condemned in scripture, because St. Paul, when writing to the Corinthians, did not speak against these diversions; and that in availing himself of the Isthmian games, as a happy illustration of the Christian race, he did not drop any censure on the practice itself: a practice which was indeed as much more pure than the races of Christian Britain, as the moderation of being contented with the triumph of a crown of leaves, is superior to that criminal spirit of gambling which iniquitously enriches the victor by beggaring the competitor.

Local abuses, as we have said, were not the object of a book whose instructions were to be of universal and lasting application. As a proof of this, little is said in the gospel of the then prevailing corruption of polygamy; nothing against the savage custom of exposing children, or even against slavery; nothing expressly against suicide or duelling; the last Gothic custom, indeed, did not exist among the crimes of *Paganism*. But is there not implied a prohibition against polygamy, in the general denunciation against adultery? Is not exposing of children condemned in that charge against the Romans, that 'they were without natural affection?' Is there not a strong censure against slavery conveyed in the command, to 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you?' and against suicide and duelling, in the general prohibition against murder, which is strongly enforced and affectingly amplified by the solemn manner in which murder is traced back to its first seed of anger in the sermon on the mount?

Thus it is clear, that when Christ sent the gospel to all nations, he meant that that gospel should proclaim those prime truths, general laws, and fundamental doctrines, which must necessarily involve the prohibition of all individual, local, and inferior errors; errors which could not have been specifically guarded against, without having a distinct gospel for every country, or without swelling the divine volume into such inconvenient length as would have defeated one great end of its promulgation.* And while its leading principles are of universal application, it must always, in some measure, be left to the discretion of the preacher, and to the conscience of the hearer, to examine whether the life and habits of those who profess it, are conformable to its main spirit and design.

The same Divine Spirit which indited the Holy Scriptures, is promised to purify the hearts and renew the natures of repenting and believing Christians; and the compositions it inspired, are in some degree analogous to the workmanship it effects. It prohibited the vicious practices of the apostolical days, by prohibiting the passions and principles which render them gratifying; and still working in like manner on the hearts of real Christians, it corrects the taste which was accustomed to find its proper gratification in the resorts of vanity; and thus effectually provides for the reformation of the habits, and infuses a relish for rational and domestic enjoyments, and for whatever can administer pleasure to that spirit of peace, and love, and hope, and joy, which animates and rules the renewed heart of the true Christian.

But there is a portion of scripture which, though to a superficial reader it may seem but very remotely connected with the present subject, yet to readers of another cast, seems to settle the matter beyond controversy. In the parable of the great supper, this important truth is held out to us, that even things *good in themselves*, may be the means of our eternal ruin; by drawing our hearts from God, and causing us to make light of the offers of the gospel. One invited guest had bought an estate, another had made a purchase, equally blameless, of oxen; a third had married a wife, an act not illaudable in itself. They

* 'To the *poor* the gospel is preached,'—Luke vii. 22.

had all different reasons, none of which appeared to have any moral turpitude; but they all agree in this, *to decline the invitation to the supper.* The worldly possessions of one, the worldly business of another, and what should be particularly attended to, the love to his dearest relative, of a third, (a love by the way, not only allowed, but commanded in Scripture) were brought forward as excuses for not attending to the important business of religion. The consequence, however, was the same to all. 'None of those which were bidden shall taste of my supper.' If then things *innocent*, things *necessary*, things *laudable*, things *commanded*, become sinful, when by unseasonable or excessive indulgence, they detain the heart and affections from God, how vain will all those arguments necessarily be rendered, which are urged by the advocates for certain amusements, on the ground of their *harmlessness;* if those amusements serve (not to mention any positive evil which may belong to them) in like manner to draw away the thoughts and affections from all spiritual objects!

To conclude; when this topic happens to become the subject of conversation, instead of addressing severe and pointed attacks to young ladies on the sin of attending places of diversion, would it not be better first to endeavour to excite in them that principle of Christianity, with which such diversions seem not quite compatible; as the physician, who visits a patient in an eruptive fever, pays little attention to those spots which to the ignorant appear to be the disease, except indeed so far as they serve as indications to let him into its nature, but goes straight to the root of the malady? He attacks the fever, he lowers the pulse, he changes the system, he corrects the general habit; well knowing that if he can but restore the vital principle of health, the spots, which were nothing but symptoms, will die away of themselves.

In instructing others, we should imitate our Lord and his apostles, and not always aim our blow at each particular corruption; but making it our business to convince our pupil that what brings forth the evil fruit she exhibits, cannot be a branch of the true vine; we should thus avail ourselves of individual corruptions, for impressing her with a sense of the necessity of purifying the common source from whence they flow—a corrupt nature. Thus making it our grand business to rectify the heart, we pursue the true, the compendious, the only method of producing universal holiness.

I would, however, take leave of those amiable and not ill-disposed young persons, who complain of the rigour of human prohibitions, and declare, 'they meet with no such strictness in the Gospel,' by asking them with the most affectionate earnestness, if they can conscientiously reconcile their nightly attendance, at every public place which they frequent, with such precepts as the following: 'Redeeming the time;'—'Watch and pray:'—'Watch, for ye know not at what time your Lord cometh:'—'Abstain from all *appearance* of evil:'—'Set your affections on things above:'—'Be ye spiritually minded:'—'Crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts!' And I would venture to offer one criterion, by which the persons in question may be enabled to decide on the positive innocence and safety of such diversions; I mean, provided they are sincere in their scrutiny and honest in their avowal. If, on their return at night from those places, they find they can retire, and 'commune with their own hearts;' if they find the love of God operating with undiminished force on their minds; if they can 'bring every thought into subjection,' and concentrate every wandering imagination; if they can soberly examine into their own state of mind—:—I do not say if they can do all this perfectly and without distraction: (for who almost can do this at any time?) but if they can do it with the same *degree* of seriousness, pray with the same *degree* of fervour, and renounce the world in as great a *measure* as at other times; and if they can lie down with a peaceful consciousness of having avoided in the evening, 'that temptation' which they had prayed not to be 'led into' in the morning, they may then more reasonably hope that all is well, and that they are not speaking false peace to their hearts.—Again, if we cannot beg the blessing of our Maker on whatever we are going to do or to enjoy, is it not an unequivocal proof that the thing ought not to *be* done or enjoyed? On all the rational enjoyments of society, on all healthful and temperate exercise, on the delights of friendship, arts, and polished letters, on the exquisite pleasures resulting from the enjoyment of rural scenery; and the beauties of nature; on the innocent participation of these we may ask the divine favour—for the sober enjoyment of these we may thank the divine beneficence: but do we feel equally disposed to invoke blessings or return praises for gratifications found (to say no worse) in levity, in vanity, and waste of time?—If these tests were fairly used; if these experiments were honestly tried; if these examinations were conscientiously made, may we not, without offence, presume to ask—*Could* our numerous places of public resort, *could* our ever-multiplying scenes of more select but not less dangerous diversion, nightly overflow with an excess hitherto unparalleled in the annals of pleasure?*

* If I might presume to recommend a book which of all others exposes the insignificance, vanity, littleness and emptiness of the world, I should not hesitate to name Mr. Law's Serious call to a devout and holy life' Few writers except Pascal, have directed so much acuteness of reasoning and so much pointed wit to this object. He not only makes the reader afraid of a worldly life on account of its sinfulness, but ashamed of it on account of its folly. Few men perhaps have had a deeper insight into the human heart, or have more skilfully probed its corruptions: yet on points of doctrine his views do not seem to be just, and his disquisitions are often unsound and fanciful, so that a *general* perusal of his works would neither be profitable nor intelligible To a fashionable woman immersed in the vanities of life, or to a busy man overwhelmed with its cares, I know no book so applicable, or likely to exhibit with equal force the vanity of the shadows they are pursuing But even in this work, Law is not a safe guide to evangelical light; and in many of his others he is highly visionary and whimsical. and I have known some excellent persons who were first led by this admirable genius to see the wants of their own hearts, and the utter insufficiency of the world to fill up the craving void, who, though they became eminent for piety and self denial, have had their usefulness abridged; and whose minds have contracted something of a monastic severity by an unqualified perusal of Mr. Law. True Christianity does not call on us to starve our bodies, but our corruptions.

CHAP. XIX.

A worldly spirit incompatible with the spirit of Christianity.

Is it not whimsical to hear such complaints against the strictness of religion as we are frequently hearing, from the beings who are voluntarily pursuing, as has been shown in the preceding chapters, a course of life which fashion makes infinitely more severe. How really burdensome would Christianity be if she enjoined such sedulous application, such unremitting labours, such a succession of fatigues! If religion commanded such hardships and self-denial, such days of hurry, such evenings of exertion, such nights of broken rest, such perpetual sacrifices of quiet, such exile from family delights, as *fashion* imposes, then indeed the service of Christianity would no longer merit its present appellation of being a '*reasonable* service:' then the name of perfect slavery might be justly applied to that which we are told in the beautiful language of our church, is 'a service of perfect freedom;' a service the great object of which is 'to deliver us from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.'

A worldly temper, by which I mean a disposition to prefer worldly pleasures, worldly satisfactions, and worldly advantages, to the immortal interests of the soul; and to let worldly considerations actuate us instead of the dictates of religion in the concerns of ordinary life; a worldly temper, I say, is not, like almost any other fault, the effect of passion or the consequence of surprise, when the heart is off its guard. It is not excited incidentally by the operation of external circumstances on the infirmity of nature: but it is the vital spirit, the essential soul, the living principle of evil. It is not so much an act, as a state of being; not so much an occasional complaint, as a tainted constitution of mind. It does not always show itself in extraordinary excesses, it has no perfect intermission. Even when it is not immediately tempted to break out into overt and specific acts, it is at work within, stirring up the heart to disaffection against holiness, and infusing a kind of moral disability to whatever is intrinsically right. It infects and depraves all the powers and faculties of the soul; for it operates on the understanding, by blinding it to whatever is spiritually good; on the will, by making it averse from God; on the affections, by disordering and sensualizing them; so that one may almost say to those who are under the supreme dominion of this spirit, what was said to the hosts of Joshua, 'Ye *cannot* serve the Lord.'

The worldliness of mind is not at all commonly understood, and for the following reason:—People suppose that in this world, our chief business is with the things of this world, and that to conduct the business of this world well, that is conformably to moral principles, is the chief substance of moral and true goodness. Religion, if introduced at all into the system, only makes it occasional, and if I may so speak its holyday appearance. To bring religion into every thing, is thought incompatible with the due attention to the things of this life. And so it would be, if by religion were meant *talking* about religion. The phrase, therefore, is: 'We cannot always be praying; we must mind our business and our social duties as well as our devotion.' Worldly business being thus subjected to worldly, though in some degree moral, maxims, the mind during the conduct of business grows worldly; and a continually increasing worldly spirit dims the sight and relaxes the moral principle on which the affairs of the world are conducted, as well as indisposes the mind for all the exercises of devotion.

But this temper as far as relates to *business*, so much assumes the semblance of goodness, that those who have not the right views are apt to mistake the carrying on the affairs of life on a tolerable moral principle, for religion. They do not see that the evil lies not in their so carrying on business, but in their not carrying on the things of this life in subserviency to the things of eternity; in their not carrying them on with the unintermitting idea of responsibility. The evil does not lie in their not being always on their knees, but in their not bringing their religion from the closet into the world: in their not bringing the spirit of Sunday's devotions into the transactions of the week: in not transforming their religion from a dry, and speculative, and imperative system, into a lively, and influential, and unceasing principle of action.

Though there are, blessed be God! in the most exalted stations, women who adorn their Christian profession by a consistent conduct; yet are there not others who are labouring hard to unite the irreconcileable interests of earth and heaven? who, while they will not relinquish one jot of what *this* world has to bestow, yet by no means renounce their hopes of a better? who do not think it unreasonable that their indulging in the fullest possession of present pleasure should interfere with the most certain reversion of future glory? who, after living in the most unbounded gratification of ease, vanity, and luxury, fancy that heaven must be attached of course to a life of which Christianity is the outward profession and which has not been stained by any flagrant or dishonourable act of guilt.

Are there not many who, while they entertain a respect for Religion (for I address not the unbelieving or the licentious) while they believe its truths, observe its forms, and would be shocked not to be thought religious are yet immersed in this life of disqualifying worldliness? who, though they make a conscience of going to the public worship once on a Sunday; and are scrupulously observant of the other rites of the church, yet hesitate not to give up all the rest of their time to the very same pursuits and pleasures which occupy the hearts and engross the lives of those looser characters whose enjoyment is not obstructed by any dread of a future account? and who are acting on the wise principle of the 'children of the world,' in making the most of the present

As the mortified apostle of the holy and self-denying Baptist, preaching repentance because the kingdom of Heaven is at hand, Mr. Law has no superior. As a preacher of salvation on spiritual grounds I would follow other guides.

state of being from the conviction that there is no other to be expected.

It must be owned, indeed, that faith in unseen things is at times lamentably weak and defective even in the truly pious; and that it is so, is the subject of their grief and humiliation. O! how does the real Christian take shame in the coldness of his belief, in the lowness of his attainments! How deeply does he lament that 'when he would do good, evil is present with him!'—'that the life he now lives in the flesh, is' not, in the degree it ought to be, 'by faith in the Son of God!' Yet one thing is clear; however weak his belief may seem to be, it is evident that his actions are principally governed by it; he evinces his sincerity to others by a life in some good degree analogous to the doctrines he professes; while to himself he has at least this conviction, that faint as his confidence may be at times, low as may be his hope, and feeble as his faith may seem, yet at the worst of times he would not exchange that faint measure of trust and hope for all the actual pleasures and possessions of his most splendid acquaintance; and what is a proof of his sincerity he never seeks the cure of his dejection, where they seek theirs, in this world, but in God.

But as to the faith of worldly persons, however strong it may be in speculation, however orthodox their creed, however stout their profession, we cannot help fearing that it is a little defective in sincerity: for if there were in their minds a full persuasion of the truth of Revelation, and of the eternal bliss it promises, would it not be obvious to them that there must be more diligence for its attainment? We discover great ardour in carrying on worldly projects, because we believe the good which we are pursuing is real, and will reward the trouble of the pursuit; we believe *that* good is to be attained by diligence, and we prudently proportion our earnestness to this conviction; when therefore we see persons professing a lively faith in a better world, yet labouring little to obtain an interest in it, can we forbear suspecting that their belief, not only of their own title to eternal happiness but of eternal happiness itself, is not well grounded; and that, if they were to 'examine themselves truly,' and to produce the principle of such a relaxed morality, the faith would be found to be much of a piece with the practice?

The objections which disincline the world to make present sacrifices of pleasure, with a view to obtaining eternal happiness, are such as apply to all the ordinary concerns of life. That is, men object chiefly to a religious course as tending to rob them of that actual pleasure which is within their reach, for the sake of a remote enjoyment. They object to giving up the seen good for the unseen. But do not almost all the transactions of life come under the same description?—Do we not give up present ease and renounce much indulgence in order to acquire a future? Do we not part with our current money for the reversion of an estate, which we know it will be a long time before we can possess? Nay, do not the most worldly often submit to an immediate inconvenience, by reducing their present income, in order to insure to themselves a larger capital for their future subsistence?

Now, 'Faith, which is the substance of things hoped for,' is meant to furnish the soul with present support, while it satisfies it as to the security on which it has lent itself; just as a man's bonds and mortgages assure him that he is really rich, though he has not all the money in hand ready to spend at the moment. Those who truly believe the Bible, must in the same manner be content to live on its promises, by which God has as it were pledged himself for their future blessedness.

Even that very spirit of enjoyment which leads the persons in question so studiously to possess themselves of the qualifications necessary for the pleasures of the present scene, that understanding and good sense, which leads them to acquire such talents as may enable them to relish the resorts of gayety here; that very spirit should induce those who are really looking for a future state of happiness, to wish to acquire something of the taste, and temper, and talents, which may be considered as qualifications for the enjoyment of that happiness. The neglect of doing this must proceed from one of these two causes; either they must think their present course a safe and proper course; or they must think that death is to produce some sudden and surprising alteration in the human character. But the office of death is to transport us to a new state, not to transform us to a new nature; the stroke of death is intended to effect our deliverance out of this world, and our introduction into another; but it is not likely to effect any sudden and wonderful, much less a total change in our hearts or our tastes; so far from this that we are assured in Scripture, 'that he that is filthy will be filthy still, and he that is holy will be holy still.' Though we believe that death will completely cleanse the holy soul from its remaining pollutions, that it will exchange defective sanctification into perfect purity, entangling temptation into complete freedom; suffering and affliction into health and joy; doubts and fears into perfect security, and oppressive weariness into everlasting rest; yet there is no magic in the wand of death which will convert an unholy soul into a holy one. And it is awful to reflect, that such tempers as have the allowed predominance here will maintain it forever; that such as the will is when we close our eyes upon the things of time, such it will be when we open them on those of eternity. The mere act of death no more fits us for heaven, than the mere act of the mason who pulls down our old house fits us for a new one. If we die with our hearts running over with the love of the world, there is no promise to lead us to expect that we shall rise with them full of the love of God. Death indeed will show us to ourselves such as we are, but will not make us such as we are not: and it will be too late to be acquiring self-knowledge when we can no longer turn it to any account, but that of tormenting ourselves. To illustrate this truth still farther by an allusion familiar to the persons I address: the drawing up the curtain at the theatre, though it serve to introduce us to the entertainments behind it, does not create in us any new faculties to un-

derstand or to relish those entertainments: these must have been already acquired; they must have been provided beforehand, and brought with us to the place, if we would relish the pleasure of the place; for the entertainment can only operate on that taste we carry to it. It is too late to be acquiring when we ought to be enjoying.

That spirit of prayer and praise, those dispositions of love, meekness, 'peace, quietness, and assurance;' that indifference to the fashion of a world which is passing away; that longing after deliverance from sin; that desire of holiness, together with all 'the fruits of the Spirit' here, must surely make some part of our qualification for the enjoyment of a world, the pleasures of which are all spiritual. And who can conceive any thing comparable to the awful surprise of a soul long immersed in the indulgences of vanity and pleasure, yet all the while lulled by the self-complacency of a religion of mere forms; who, while it counted upon heaven as a thing of course; had made no preparation for it! Who can conceive any surprise comparable to that of such a soul on shutting its eyes on a world of sense, of which all the objects and delights were so congenial to its nature, and opening them on a world of spirits of which all the characters of enjoyment are of a nature new, unknown, surprising, and specifically different? pleasures more inconceivable to its apprehension and more unsuitable to its taste, than the gratifications of one sense are to the organs of another, or than the most exquisite works of art and genius to absolute imbecility of mind.

While we would with deep humility confess that we cannot purchase heaven by any works or right dispositions of our own; while we gratefully acknowledge that it must be purchased for us by 'Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his blood;' yet let us remember that we have no reason to expect we could be capable of enjoying the pleasures of a heaven so purchased without heavenly mindedness.

When those persons who are apt to expect as much comfort from religion as if their hearts were not full of the world, now and then in a fit of honesty or low spirits, complain that Christianity does not make them as good and happy as they were led to expect from that assurance, that 'great peace have they who love the law of God,' and that 'they who wait on him shall want no manner of thing that is good;' when they lament that the paths of religion are not those 'paths of pleasantness' which they were led to expect; their case reminds one of a celebrated physician, who used to say that the reason why his prescriptions, which commonly cured the poor and the temperate, did so little good among his rich and luxurious patients, was, that while he was labouring to remove the disease by medicines, of which they only took drams, grains, and scruples, they were inflaming it by a multiplicity of injurious aliments, which they swallowed by ounces, pounds, and pints.

These fashionable Christians should be reminded, that there was no half engagement made for them at their baptism; that they are not partly their own, and partly their Redeemer's. 'He that is bought with a price,' is the sole property of the purchaser. Faith does not consist merely in submitting the opinions of the understanding, but the dispositions of the heart: religion is not a sacrifice of sentiments, but of affections; it is not the tribute of fear extorted from a slave, but the voluntary homage of love paid by a child.

Neither does a Christian's piety consist in living in retreat, and railing at the practices of the world, while perhaps her heart is full of the spirit of that world at which she is railing: but it consists in *subduing* the spirit of the world resisting its temptations, and opposing its practices, even while her duty obliges her to live in it.

Nor is the spirit or the love of the world confined to those only who are making a figure in it; nor are its operations bounded by the precincts of the metropolis nor by the limited regions of first-rate rank and splendour. She who inveighs against the luxury and excesses of London, and solaces herself in her own comparative sobriety, because her more circumscribed fortune compels her to take up with the second-hand pleasures of successive watering-places, if she pursue these pleasures with avidity, is governed by the same spirit: and she whose still narrower opportunities stint her to the petty diversions of her provincial town, if she be busied in swelling and enlarging her smaller sphere of vanity and idleness, however she may comfort herself with her own comparative goodness, by railing at the unattainable pleasures of the watering place, or the still more unapproachable joys of the capital, is governed by the same spirit; for she who is as vain as dissipated, and as extravagant as actual circumstances admit, would be as vain, as dissipated, and as extravagant as the gayest objects of her invective actually are, if she could change places with them. It is not merely by what we do that we can be sure the spirit of the world has no dominion over us, but by fairly considering what we should probably do if more were in our power.

The worldly Christian, if I may be allowed such a palpable contradiction in terms, must not imagine that she acquits herself of her religious obligations by paying in her mere weekly oblation of prayer. There is no covenant by which communion with God is restricted to an hour or two on the Sunday: she must not imagine she acquits herself by setting apart a few particular days in the year for the exercise of a periodical devotion, and then flying back to the world as eagerly as if she were resolved to repay herself with a large interest for her short fit of self-denial; the stream of pleasure running with a more rapid current, from having been interrupted by this forced obstruction. And the avidity with which we have seen certain persons of a still less correct character than the class we have been considering, return to a whole year's carnival, after the self imposed penance of a passion week, gives a shrewd intimation that they considered the temporary abstraction less as an act of penitence for the past, than as a purchase of indemnity for the future. Such bareweight Protestants prudently condition for retaining the Popish doctrine of indulgences, which they buy not indeed of the late spiritual court of Rome

but of that secret self-acquitting judge, which ignorance of its own turpitude, and of the strict requirements of the divine law, has established supreme in the tribunal of every unrenewed heart.

But the practice of self-examination is impeded by one clog, which renders it peculiarly inconvenient to the gay and worldly: for the royal prophet (who was, however, himself as likely as any one to be acquainted with the difficulties peculiar to greatness) has annexed as a concomitant to 'communing with our own heart,' that we should '*be still*.' Now this clause of the injunction annihilates the other, by rendering it incompatible with the present habits of fashionable life, of which *stillness* is clearly not one of the constituents. It would, however, greatly assist those who do not altogether decline the practice, if they were to establish into a rule the habit of detecting certain suspicious practices, by realizing them, as it were, to their own minds, through the means of drawing them out in detail, and of placing them before their eyes clothed in language; for there is nothing that so effectually exposes an absurdity which has hitherto passed muster for want of such an inquisition, as giving it shape, and form, and body. How many things which now silently work themselves into the habit, and pass current without inquiry, would then shock us by their palpable inconsistency! Who, for instance, could stand the sight of such a debtor and creditor account as this:—*Item;* so many card-parties, balls, and operas due to me in the following year, for so many manuals, prayers, and meditations paid beforehand during the last six days in lent? With how much indignation soever this suggestion may be treated; whatever offence may be taken at such a combination of the serious and the ludicrous; however we may revolt at the idea of such a composition with our Maker, when put into so many words; does not the habitual course of some go near to realize such a statement?

But 'a Christian's *race*,' as a venerable prelate* observes, 'is not to run at so many *heats*,' but is a constant course, a regular progress by which we are continually gaining ground upon sin, and approaching nearer to the kingdom of God.

Am I then ridiculing this pious seclusion of contrite sinners? Am I then jesting at that 'troubled spirit' which God has declared is his 'acceptable sacrifice?' God forbid! Such reasonable retirements have been the practice, and continue to be the comfort of some of the sincerest Christians; and *will* continue to be resorted to as long as Christianity, that is, as long as the world shall last. It is well to call off the thoughts, even for a short time, not only from sin and vanity, but even from the lawful pursuits of business and the laudable concerns of life; and at times, to annihilate, as it were, the space which divides us from eternity:

'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,
And ask them what report they bore to heaven,
And how they might have borne more welcome news

Yet to those who seek a short annual retreat

* Bishop Hopkins.

as a mere form; who dignify with the idea a religious retirement, a week in which it is rather unfashionable to be seen in town; who retire with unabated resolution to return to the maxims, the pleasures, and the spirit of that world which they do but mechanically renounce; is it not to be feared that this short secession, which does not even pretend to subdue the principle, but merely suspends the act, may only serve to set a keener edge on the appetite for the pleasures they are quitting? Is it not to be feared that the bow may fly back with redoubled violence from having been unnaturally bent? that by varnishing over a life of vanity with the transient externals of a formal and temporary piety they may the more dangerously skin over the troublesome soreness of a tender conscience, by laying

This flattering unction to the soul?

And is it not awfully to be apprehended that such devotions come in among those vain oblations which the Almighty has declared he will not accept? For, is it not among the delusions of a worldly piety, to consider Christianity as a thing which cannot, indeed, safely be omitted, but which is to *be got over;* a certain quantity of which is, as it were, to be taken in the lump, with long intervals between the repetitions? Is it not among its delusions to consider religion as imposing a set of hardships, which *must* be occasionally encountered, in order to procure a peaceable enjoyment of the long respite?—a short penalty for a long pleasure? that these severer conditions thus fulfilled, the acquitted Christian having paid the annual demand of a rigorous requisition, she may now lawfully return to her natural state; the old reckoning being adjusted, she may begin a new score, and receive the reward of her punctual obedience, in the resumed indulgence of those gratifications which she had for a short time laid aside as a hard task to please a hard master; but this task performed and the master appeased, the mind may discover its natural bent, in joyfully returning to the objects of its real choice? Whereas, it is not clear on the other hand, that if the religious exercises had produced the effect which it is the nature of true religion to produce, the penitent *could* not return with her own genuine alacrity to those habits of the world, from which the pious weekly manuals through which she has been labouring with the punctuality of an almanac as to the day, and the accuracy of a bead-roll as to the number, were intended by the devout authors to rescue their reader?

I am far from insinuating, that this literal sequestration ought to be prolonged throughout the year, or that all the days of business are to be made equally days of solemnity and continued meditation. This earth is a place in which a much larger portion of a common Christian's time must be assigned to action than to contemplation. Women of the higher class were not sent into the world to shun society, but to improve it. They were not designed for the cold and visionary virtues of solitudes and monasteries, but for the amiable, and endearing, and useful offices of social life: they are of a religion which does not impose idle austerities, but en-

joins active duties; a religion which demands the most benevolent actions, and which requires them to be sanctified by the purest motives; religion which does not condemn its followers to the comparatively easy task of seclusion *from* the world, but assigns them the more difficult province of living uncorrupted *in it;* a religion which, while it forbids them 'to follow a multitude to do *evil*,' includes in that prohibition the sin of doing *nothing*, and which moreover enjoins them to be followers of Him 'who went about doing *good*.'

But may we not reasonably contend, that though the same sequestration is not required, yet that the same *spirit* and *temper* which we would hope is thought necessary even by those on whom we are animadverting, during the occasional humiliation, must by every real Christian be extended throughout all the periods of the year? And when that is really the case, when once the spirit of religion shall indeed govern the heart, it will not only animate her religious actions and employments, but will gradually extend itself to the chastising her conversation, will discipline her thoughts, influence her common business, restrain her indulgences, and sanctify her very pleasures.

But it seems that many, who entertain a *general* notion of Christian duty, do not consider it as of universal and unremitting obligation, but rather as a duty binding at times on all, and at all times on some. To the attention of such we would recommend that very explicit address of our Lord on the subject of self-denial, the temper directly opposed to a worldly spirit: 'And he said unto them ALL, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross DAILY.' Those who think self-denial not of *universal* obligation will observe the word *all;* and those who think the obligation not *constant*, will attend to the term *daily*. These two little words cut up by the root all the occasional religious observances grafted on a worldly life; all transient, periodical, and temporary acts of piety, which some seem willing to commute for a life of habitual thoughtlessness and vanity.

There is, indeed, scarcely a more pitiable being than one who, instead of making her religion the informing principle of all she does has only just enough to keep her in continual fear; who drudges through her stinted exercises with a superstitious kind of terror, while her general life shows that the love of holiness is not the governing principle in her heart; who seems to suffer all the pains and penalties of Christianity, but is a stranger to 'that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.' Let it not be thought a ludicrous invention, if the author hazard the producing a real illustration of these remarks, in the instance of a lady of this stamp, who returning from church on a very cold day, and remarking with a good deal of self-complacency how much she had suffered in the performance of her duty, comforted herself with emphatically adding, 'that she hoped it would *answer*.'

There is this striking difference between the real and the worldly Christian, the latter does not complain of the strictness of the divine law, but of the deficiencies of his own performance; while the worldly Christian is little troubled at his own failures, but deplores the strictness of the divine requisitions. The one wishes that God would expect less, the other prays for strength to do more. When the worldly person hears real Christians speak of their own low state, and acknowledge their extreme unworthiness, he really believes them to be worse than those who make no such humiliating confessions. He does not know that a mind which is at once deeply convinced of its own corruptions, and of the purity of the divine law, is so keenly alive to the perception of all sin, as to be humbled by the commission of such as is comparatively small, and which those who have less correct views of gospel truth, hardly allow to be sin at all. Such an one, with Job, says, 'Now mine eye *seeth* Thee.'

But there is no permanent comfort in any religion, short of that by which the diligent Christian strives that all his actions shall have the love of God for their motive, and the glory of God, as well as his own salvation, for their end; while we go about to balance our good and bad actions, one against the other, and to take comfort in the occasional predominance of the former while the cultivation of the principle from which they should spring is neglected, is not the road to all those peaceful fruits of the Spirit to which true Christianity conducts the humble and penitent believer. For, after all we can do, Christian tempers and a Christian spirit are the true criterion of a Christian character, and serve furnish the most unequivocal test of our attainments in religion. Our doctrines may be sound, but they may not be influential; our actions may be correct, but they may want the sanctifying principle; our frames and feelings may *seem*, nay they may be devout, but they may be heightened by mere animal fervour; even if genuine, they are seldom lasting; and to many pious persons they are not given: it is therefore the Christian tempers which most infallibly indicate the sincere Christian, and best prepare him for the heavenly state.

I am aware that a better cast of characters than those we have been contemplating; that even the amiable and the well-disposed, who, while they want courage to resist what they have too much principle to think right, and too much sense to justify, will yet plead for the *palliating* system, and accuse these remarks of unnecessary rigour. They will declare 'That really they are as religious as they can be; they wish they were better: they have little satisfaction in the life they are leading, yet they cannot break with the world; they cannot fly in the face of custom; it does not become individuals like them to oppose the torrent of fashion.' Beings so interesting, abounding with engaging qualities; who not only feel the beauty of goodness, but reverence the truths of Christianity, and are awfully looking for a general judgment, we are grieved to hear lament 'that they only do as others do,' when they are perhaps themselves of such rank and importance that if they would begin to do right, others would be brought to do as they did. We are grieved to hear them indolently assert, that, 'they wish it were otherwise,' when they possess the power to *make* it

otherwise, by setting an example which they know would be followed. We are sorry to hear them content themselves with declaring, 'that they have not the courage to be singular,' when they must feel, by seeing the influence of their example in worse things, that there would be no such great singularity in piety itself, if once *they* become sincerely pious. Besides, this diffidence does not break out on other occasions. They do not blush to be quoted as the opposers of an old mode, or the inventors of a new one: nor are they equally backward in being the first to appear in a strange fashion, such an one as often excites wonder, and sometimes even offends against delicacy. Let not then diffidence be pleaded as an excuse only on occasions wherein courage would be virtue.

Will it be thought too harsh a question if we venture to ask these gentle characters who are thus entrenching themselves in the imaginary safety of surrounding multitudes, and who say, 'We only do as others do,' whether they are willing to run the tremendous risk of consequences, and *to fare as others fare?*

But while these plead the authority of fashion as a sufficient reason for their conformity to the world, one who has spoken with a paramount authority has positively said, 'Be ye *not* conformed to the world.' Nay, it is urged as the very badge and distinction by which the character opposite to the Christian is to be marked, 'that the friendship of the world is *enmity* with God.'

Temptation to conform to the world was never perhaps more irresistible than in the days which immediately preceded the Deluge; and no man could ever have pleaded the *fashion* in order to justify a criminal assimilation with the reigning manners, with more propriety than the patriarch Noah. He had the two grand and contending objects of terror to encounter which we have; the fear of ridicule, and the fear of destruction; the dread of sin, and the dread of singularity. Our cause of alarm is at least equally pressing with his; for it does not appear, even while he was actually obeying the Divine command in providing the means of his future safety, that he *saw* any actual symptoms of the impending ruin. So that in one sense *he* might have truly pleaded as an excuse for 'slackness of preparation,' that all things continued as they were from the beginning;' while many of us, though the storm is actually begun, never think of providing the refuge: it is true he was 'warned of God,' and he provided 'by faith.' But are not we also warned of God? have we not had a fuller revelation? have we not seen Scripture illustrated, prophecy fulfilling, with every awful circumstance that can either quicken the most sluggish remissness, or confirm the feeblest faith?

Besides, the patriarch's plea for following the fashion was stronger than you can produce. While you must see that many are going wrong, he saw that none were going right. 'All flesh had corrupted his way before God;' whilst, blessed be God! you have still instances enough of piety to keep you in countenance. While you lament that *the world* seduces you (for every one has a little world of his own) your world perhaps is only a petty neighbourhood, a few streets and squares; but the patriarch had really the contagion of a whole united world to resist; he had literally the example of the whole face of the earth to oppose. The 'fear of man also would have been a more pardonable fault, when the lives of the same individuals who were likely to excite respect or fear was prolonged many ages, than it can be in the short period now assigned to human life. How lamentable then that human opinion should operate so powerfully, when it is but the breath of a being so frail and so short-lived,

> That he doth cease to be,
> Ere one can say he is?

You who find it so difficult to withstand the individual allurement of modish acquaintance, would, if you had been in the patriach's case have concluded the struggle to be quite ineffectual, and sunk under the supposed fruitlessness of resistance. 'Myself,' would you not have said? 'or at most my little family of eight persons can never hope to stop this torrent of corruption; I lament the fruitlessness of opposition; I deplore the necessity of conformity with the prevailing system: but it would be a foolish presumption to hope that *one* family can effect a change in the state of the world.' In your own case, however, is it not certain to how wide an extent the hearty union of even fewer persons in such a cause might reach: at least is it nothing to what the patriarch did? was it nothing to preserve himself from the general destruction; was it nothing to deliver his own soul? was it nothing to rescue the souls of his whole family?

A wise man will never differ from the world in trifles. It is certainly a mark of a sound judgment to comply with custom whenever we safely can; such compliance strengthens our influence by reserving to ourselves the greater weight of authority on those occasions, when our conscience obliges us to differ. Those who are prudent will cheerfully conform to all the innocent usages of the world; but those who are Christians will be scrupulous in defining which are really innocent previous to their conformity to them. Not what the world, but what the Gospel calls innocent will be found at the grand scrutiny to have been really so. A discreet Christian will take due pains to be convinced he is right before he will presume to be singular: but from the instant he is persuaded the Gospel is true, and the world of course wrong, he will no longer risk his safety by following multitudes, or hazard his soul by staking it on human opinion. All our most dangerous mistakes arise from our not constantly referring our practice to the standard of Scripture, instead of the mutable standard of human estimation by which it is impossible to fix the real value of characters. For this latter standard in some cases determines those to be good who do not run all the lengths in which the notoriously bad allow themselves. The Gospel has an universal, the world has a local standard of goodness; in certain societies certain vices alone are dishonour able, such as covetousness and cowardice; while those sins of which our Saviour has said, that

they which commit them 'shall not inherit the kingdom of God,' detract nothing from the respect some persons receive. Nay, those very characters whom the Almighty has expressly and awfully declared 'He will judge,'* are received, are admired, are caressed, in that which calls itself the best company.

But to weigh our actions by one standard now, when we know they will be judged by another hereafter, would be reckoned the height of absurdity in any transctions but those which involve the interests of eternity. 'How readest thou?' is a more specific direction than any comparative view of our own habits with the habits of others: and at the final bar it will be of little avail that our actions have risen above those of bad men, if our views and principles shall be found to have been in opposition the Gospel of Christ.

Nor is *their* practice more commendable, who are ever on the watch to pick out the worst actions of good men, by way of justifying their own conduct on the comparison. The faults of the best men, 'for there is not a just man upon earth who sinneth not,' can in no wise justify the errors of the worst: and it is not invariably the example of even good men that we must take for our unerring rule of conduct: nor is it by a single action that either they or we shall be judged; for in that case who could be saved? but it is by the general prevalence of right principles and good habits and Christian tempers; by the predominance of holiness and righteousness, and temperance in the life, and by the power of humility, faith and love in the heart.

CHAP. XX.

On the leading doctrines of Christianity.—The corruption of human nature. The doctrine of redemption. The necessity of a change of heart and of the divine influences to produce that change. With a sketch of the Christian character.

THE author having in this little work taken a view of the false notions often imbibed in early life from a bad education, and of their pernicious effects; and having attempted to point out the respective remedies to these; she would now draw all that has been said to a point, and declare plainly what she humbly conceives to be the source whence all these false notions and this wrong conduct really proceed: the prophet Jeremiah shall answer: 'It is because they have forsaken the fountain of living waters, and have hewn out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.' It is an ignorance past belief of what true Christianity really is: the remedy, therefore, and the only remedy that can be applied with any prospect of success, is RELIGION, and by Religion she would be understood to mean the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

It has been before hinted, that religion should be taught at an early period of life; that children should be *brought up* 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' The *manner* in which they should be taught has likewise with great plainness been suggested; that it should be done in so lively and familiar a manner as to make religion amiable, and her ways to appear, what they really are, 'ways of pleasantness.' And a slight sketch has been given of the genius of Christianity, by which her amiableness would more clearly appear. But this, being a subject of such vast importance compared with which every other subject sinks into nothing; it seems not sufficient to speak on the doctrines and duties of Christianity in *detached* parts, but it is of importance to point out, though in a brief and imperfect manner, the mutual dependence of one doctrine upon another, and the influence which these doctrines have upon the heart and life, so that the *duties* of Christianity may be seen to grow out of its *doctrines:* by which it will appear that Christian virtue differs *essentially* from pagan: it is of a quite different kind; the plant itself is different, it comes from a different root, and grows in a different soil.

It will be seen how the humbling doctrine of the corruption of human nature, which was followed from the corruption of our first parents, makes way for the bright display of redeeming love. How from the abasing thought that 'we are all as sheep going astray, every one in his own way;' that none *can* return to the Shepherd of our souls, 'except the Farther draw him:' that 'the natural man *cannot* receive the things of the Spirit, because they are spiritually discerned:' how from this humiliating view of the *helplessness*, as well as the *corruption* of human nature, we are to turn to that animating doctrine, the offer of *divine assistance.* So that, though human nature will appear from this view in a deeply degraded state, and consequently *all* have cause for humility, yet not one has cause for despair: the disease indeed is dreadful, but a physician is at hand, both able and willing to save us: though we are naturally without 'strength, our help is laid upon one that is mighty.' If the gospel discover to us our lapsed state, it discovers also the means of our restoration to the divine image and favour. It not only discovers but impresses this image; it not only gives us the description, but the attainment of this favour; and while the word of God suggests the remedy, his Spirit applies it.

We should observe then, that the doctrines of our Saviour are, if I may so speak, with a beautiful consistency, all woven into one piece. We should get such a view of their reciprocal dependence as to be persuaded that without a deep sense of our own corruptions we can never seriously believe in a Saviour, because the substantial and acceptable belief in Him must always arise from the conviction of our want of Him; that without a firm persuasion that the Holy Spirit can alone restore our fallen nature, repair the ruins of sin, and renew the image of God upon the heart, we never shall be brought to serious humble prayer for repentance and restoration; and that, without this repentance, there is no salvation: for though Christ has died for us, and consequently to him alone we must look as a Saviour, yet he has himself declared that he will save none but true penitents.

* Hebrew. xiii. 4.

On the doctrine of human corruption.

To come now to a more particular statement of these doctrines. When an important edifice is about to be erected, a wise builder will dig deep, and look well to the foundations: knowing that without this the fabric will not be likely to stand. The foundation of the Christian religion, out of which the whole structure may be said to arise, appears to be the doctrine of the fall of man from his original state of righteousness; and the corruption and helplessness of human nature, which are the consequences of this fall, and which is the natural state of every one born into the world. To this doctrine it is important to conciliate the minds, more especially of young persons, who are peculiarly disposed to turn away from it as a morose, unamiable and gloomy idea. They are apt to accuse those who are more strict, and serious of unnecessary severity, and to suspect them of thinking unjustly ill of mankind. Some of the reasons which prejudice the inexperienced against the doctrine in question appear to be the following:

Young persons themselves have seen little of the world. In pleasurable society the world puts on its most amiable appearance; and that softness and urbanity which prevail, particularly amongst persons of fashion, are liable to be mistaken for more than they are really worth. The opposition to this doctrine in the young, arises partly from ingenuousness of heart, partly from a habit of indulging themselves in favourable suppositions respecting the world, rather than of pursuing truth, which is always the grand thing to be pursued; and partly from the popularity of the tenet, *that every body is so wonderfully good!*

This error in youth has however a still deeper foundation, which is their not having a right standard of moral good and evil themselves, in consequence of their already partaking of the very corruption which is spoken of, and which, in perverting the will, darkens the understanding also; they are therefore apt to have no very strict sense of duty, or of the necessity of a right and religious motive to every act.

Moreover, young people usually do not know themselves. Not having yet been much exposed to temptation, owing to the prudent restraints in which they have been kept, they little suspect to what lengths in vice they are liable to be transported, nor how far others are actually carried who are set free from those restraints.

Having laid down these as some of the causes of error on this point, I proceed to observe on what strong grounds the doctrine itself stands.

Profane history abundantly confirms this truth: the history of the world being in fact but little else than the history of the crimes of the human race. Even though the annals of remote ages lie so involved in obscurity, that some degree of uncertainty attaches itself to many of the events recorded, yet this one melancholy truth is always clear, that most of the miseries which have been brought upon mankind, have proceeded from this general depravity.

The world we now live in furnishes abundant proof of this truth. In a world formed on the deceitful theory of those who assert the innocence and dignity of man, almost all the professions, since they would have been rendered useless by such a state of innocence, would not have existed. Without sin we may fairly presume there would have been no sickness; so that every medical professor is a standing evidence of this sad truth. Sin not only brought sickness but death into the world; consequently every funeral presents a more irrefragable argument than a thousand sermons. Had man persevered in his original integrity, there could have been no litigation, for there would be no contests about property in a world where none would be inclined to attack it. Professors of law, therefore, from the attorney who prosecutes for a trespass, to the pleader who defends a criminal, or the judge who condemns him, loudly confirm the doctrine. Every victory by sea or land should teach us to rejoice with humiliation, for conquest itself brings a terrible, though splendid attestation to the truth of the fall of man.

Even those who deny the doctrine, act universally more or less on the principle. Why do we all secure our houses with bolts, and bars, and locks? Do we take those steps to defend our lives or property from any *particular* fear; from any suspicion of *this* neighbour, or *that* servant, or the *other* invader? No—It is from a practical conviction of the common depravity; from a constant, pervading, but undefined dread of impending evil arising from the sense of general corruption. Are not prisons built, and laws enacted on the same practical principle?

But not to descend to the more degraded part of our species. Why in the fairest transaction of business is nothing executed without bonds, receipts, and notes of hand? why does not a perfect confidence in the *dignity of human nature* abolish all these securities; if not between enemies, or people indifferent to each other, yet at least between friends and kindred, and the most honourable connexions? why, but because of that universal suspicion between man and man, which, by all we see, and hear, and feel, is become interwoven with our very make? Though we do not entertain any *individual* suspicion, nay, though we have the strongest *personal* confidence, yet the acknowledged principle of conduct has this doctrine for its basis. 'I will take a receipt, though it were from my brother,' is the established voice of mankind; or as I have heard it more artfully put, by a fallacy of which the very disguise discovers the principle, 'Think every man honest, but deal with him as if you knew him to be otherwise.' And as in a state of innocence, the beasts, it is presumed, would not have bled for the sustenance of man, so their parchments would not have been wanted as instruments of his security against his fellow man.*

But the grand arguments for this doctrine must be drawn from the Holy Scriptures; and these, besides implying it almost continually,

* Bishop Butler distinctly declares this truth to be evident from experience as well as Revelation, 'that this world exhibits an idea of a *Ruin*;' and *he* will hazard much who ventures to assert that Butler defended Christianity upon principles unconsonant to *reason*, *philosophy*, or sound experience.

expressly assert it; and that in instances too numerous to be all of them brought forward here. Of these may I be allowed to produce a few; 'God saw that the wickedness of man was great, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.—'God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt for *all flesh* had corrupted his way upon the earth. And it *repented* the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it *grieved him at his heart*.'* This is a picture of mankind *before* the flood, and the doctrine receives additional confirmation in Scripture, when it speaks of the times which followed after that tremendous judgment had taken place. The Psalms abound in lamentations on the depravity of man. 'They are *all* gone aside; there is *none* that doeth good, no not *one*.'—'In *thy* sight,' says David, addressing the Most High, 'shall *no man living* be justified.' Job, in his usual lofty strain of interrogation, asks, 'What is man that he should be clean, and he that is born of a woman that he should be righteous? Behold the heavens are not clean in *His* sight, how much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water.'†

Nor do the Scriptures speak of this corruption as arising only from occasional temptation, or from mere extrinsic causes. The wise man tells us, that 'foolishness is bound up in the *heart of a child*;' the prophet Jeremiah assures us, 'the *heart* is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked:' and David plainly states the doctrine: 'Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.' Can language be more explicit?

The New Testament corroborates the Old. Our Lord's reproof of Peter seems to take the doctrine for granted: 'Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of *man*;' clearly intimating, that the *ways of man* are opposite to the ways of God. And our Saviour, in that affecting discourse to his disciples, observes to them that, as they were by his grace made *different* from others, therefore they must expect to be hated by those who were so unlike them. And it should be particularly observed, as another proof that the world is wicked, that our Lord considered '*the world*' as opposed to him and to his disciples. 'If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.'‡ St. John, writing to his Christian church, states the same truth: 'We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.'

Man in his natural and unbelieving state, is likewise represented as in a state of *guilt*, and under the displeasure of Almighty God. 'He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God *abideth* on him.'

Here, however, if it be objected, that the heathen who never heard of the Gospel will not assuredly be judged by it, the Saviour's answer to such curious inquirers concerning the state of others is, 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate.' It is enough for us to believe that God, who will 'judge the world in righteousness,' will judge all men according to their opportunities. The heathen to whom he has not sent the light of the Gospel will probably not be judged by the Gospel. But with whatever mercy he may judge those who, living in a land of darkness, are without knowledge of his revealed law, *our* business is not with them, but with ourselves. It is *our* business to consider what mercy he will extend to those who, living in a Christian country, abounding with means and ordinances, where the Gospel is preached in its purity; it is *our* business to inquire how he will deal with those who shut their eyes to its beams, and who close their ears to its truths. For an unbeliever who has passed his life in the meredian of Scripture light, or for an outward but unfruitful professor of Christianity, I know not what hope the Gospel holds out.

The natural state of man is again thus described:—'The carnal mind is enmity against God! (awful thought!) for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed *can* be. So then they that are in the flesh *cannot* please God.' What the apostle means by *being in the flesh*, is evident by what follows; for speaking of those whose hearts were changed by divine grace, he says, 'But ye are *not* in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you;' that is, you are not now in your natural state: the change that has passed on your minds by the influence of the Spirit of God, is so great that your state may properly be called, 'being in the spirit.' It may be further observed that the same apostle, writing to the churches of Galatia, tells them, that the natural corruption of the human heart is continually opposing the Spirit of holiness which influences the regenerate. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to each other:' which passage by the way, at the same time that it proves the corruption of the heart, proves the necessity of divine influences. And the apostle, with respect to himself, freely confesses and deeply laments the workings of this corrupt principle: 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?'

It has been objected by some who have opposed this doctrine, that the same Scriptures which speak of mankind as being *sinners*, speak of some as being *righteous*; and hence they would argue that though this depravity of human nature may be *general*, yet it cannot be *universal*. This objection, when examined, serves only like all other objections against the truth to establish that which it was intended to destroy. For what do the Scriptures assert respecting the righteous? That there are some whose principles, views and conduct, are so different from the rest of the world, and from what theirs themselves once were, that these persons are honoured with the peculiar title of the 'sons of God.' But no where do the Scriptures assert, that even these are *sinless*; on the contrary their *faults* are frequently mentioned; and persons of this class are moreover represented as those on whom

* Genesis vi.

† Perhaps one reason why the faults of the most eminent saints are recorded in Scripture, is to add fresh confirmation to this doctrine If Abraham, Moses, Noah, Elijah, David, and Peter sinned, who shall we presume to say has escaped the universal taint?

‡ John, xv. 19.

a great *change* has passed: as having been formerly 'dead in trespasses and sins;' but as 'being now *called out* of darkness into light;' as '*translated* into the kingdom of God's dear Son;' as 'having *passed* from death to life.' And St. Paul put this matter past all doubt, by expressly asserting, that '*they were all* by nature the children of wrath even as others.'

It might be well to ask certain persons, who oppose the doctrine in question, and who also seem to talk as if they thought there were many sinless people in the world, how they expect that such sinless people will be saved? (though indeed to talk of an *innocent* person being *saved* involves a palpable contradiction in terms, of which those who use the expression do not seem to be aware; it is talking of curing a man already in health.) 'Undoubtedly,' such will say, 'they will be received into those abodes of bliss prepared for the righteous.' But be it remembered, there is but *one way* to these blissful abodes, and that is, through Jesus Christ: 'For there is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved.' If we ask whom did Christ come to save? the Scripture directly answers, 'He came into the world to save *sinners*:—'His name was called Jesus, because he came to save his people *from their sins*.' When St. John was favoured with a heavenly vision, he tells us, that he beheld 'a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes:' that one of the heavenly inhabitants informed him who they were:—These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in his Temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them; they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

We may gather from this description what these glorious and happy beings once were: they were *sinful* creatures: their robes were not *spotless*: 'They had *washed* them, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' They are likewise generally represented as having been once a *suffering* people: they came out of great tribulation. They are described as having overcome the great tempter of mankind, 'by the blood of the Lamb:'* as they who 'follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth:' as 'redeemed from among men.'† And their *employment* in the regions of bliss is a farther confirmation of the doctrine of which we are treating. —'The great multitude' &c. &c. we are told, 'stood and cried with a loud voice, Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb!' Here we see they ascribe their salvation to Christ, and consequently their present happiness to his atoning blood. And in another of their celestial anthems, they say in like manner: 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.'*

* Rev xii. 14. † Rev xiv. 4

By all this it is evident that men of any other description than *redeemed sinners* must gain admittance to heaven some other way than that which the Scriptures point out; and also that when they shall arrive there, so different will be their employment, that they must have an anthem peculiar to themselves.

Nothing is more adapted to 'the casting down of high imaginations,' and to promote humility, than this reflection, that heaven is always in Scripture pointed out not as the reward of the innocent, but as the hope of the penitent. This, while it is calculated to 'exclude boasting,' the temper the most opposite to the Gospel, is yet the most suited to afford comfort; for were heaven promised as the reward of innocence, who could attain to it? but being as it is the promised portion of faith and repentance, purchased for us by the blood of Christ, and offered to every penitent believer, who is compelled to miss it?

It is urged that the belief of this doctrine of our corruption produces many ill effects, and therefore it should be discouraged.—That it does *not* produce those ill effects, when not misunderstood or partially represented, we shall attempt to show: at the same time let it be observed, if it be really *true* we must not reject it on account of any of these supposed ill consequences. Truth may often be attended with disagreeable effects, but if it be truth it must still be pursued. If, for instance, treason should exist in a country, every one knows the disagreeable effects which will follow such a conviction; but our *not believing* such treason to exist, will not prevent such effect following it: on the contrary, our believing it may prevent the fatal consequences.

It is objected, that this doctrine debases and degrades human nature, and that finding fault with the building is only another way of finding fault with the architect. To the first part of this objection it may be remarked, that if man be really a corrupt, fallen being, it is proper to represent him as such: the fault then lies in the *man*, and not in the *doctrine*, which only states the *truth*. As to the inference which is supposed to follow, namely, that it throws the fault upon the Creator, it proceeds upon the false supposition that man's present corrupt state is the state in which he was originally created: the contrary of which is the truth. 'God made man upright, but he hath sought out many inventions.'

It is likewise objected, that as this doctrine must give us such a bad opinion of mankind, it must consequently produce ill-will, hatred, and suspicion. But it should be remembered, that it gives us no worse an opinion of other men than it gives us of ourselves; and such views of ourselves have a very salutary effect, inasmuch as they have a tendency to produce *humility;* and humility is not likely to produce ill-will to others, 'for only from pride cometh contention:' and as to the views it gives us of mankind, it represents us as *fellow-sufferers;* and surely the consideration that we are *companions*

* Rev. v. 9.

in misery is not calculated to produce hatred. The truth is, these effects, where they have actually followed, have followed from a false and partial view of the subject.

Old persons who have seen much of the world, and who have little religion, are apt to be strong in their belief of man's actual corruption; but not taking it up on Christian grounds, this belief in them shows itself in a narrow and malignant temper; in uncharitable judgment and harsh opinions, in individual suspicion, and in too general a disposition to hatred.

Suspicion and hatred also are the uses to which Rochefaucault and the other French philosophers have converted this doctrine: their acute minds intuitively found the corruption of man, and they saw it without its concomitant and correcting doctrine; they allowed man to be a depraved creature, but disallowed his high original: they found him in a low state, but did not conceive of him as having fallen from a better. They represent him rather as a brute than as an apostate; not taking into the account that his present degraded nature and depraved faculties are not his original state: that he is not such as he came out of the hands of his Creator, but such as he has been made by sin. Nor do they know that he has not even now lost all remains of his primitive dignity, all traces of his divine original, but is still capable of a restoration more glorious

Than is dreamt of in their philosophy.

Perhaps, too, they know from what they *feel* all the *evil* to which man is inclined; but they do not know, for they have not felt, all the good of which he is capable by the superinduction of the divine principle: thus they asperse human nature instead of representing it fairly, and in so doing it is *they* who calumniate the great Creator.

The doctrine of corruption, is likewise accused of being a gloomy, discouraging doctrine, and an enemy to joy and comfort.—Now suppose this objection true in its fullest extent, is it any way unreasonable that a being fallen into a state of sin, under the displeasure of Almighty God, should feel *seriously alarmed* at being in such a state? Is the condemned criminal blamed because he is not *merry?* And would it be esteemed a kind action to persuade him that he is *not* condemned in order to make him so?

But this charge is *not* true in the sense intended by those who bring it forward.—Those who believe this doctrine are *not* the most gloomy people. When, indeed, any one by the influence of the Holy Spirit is brought to view his state as it really is, a state of guilt and danger, it is natural that *fear* should be excited in his mind, but it is such a fear as impels him to 'flee from the wrath to come;' it is such a fear as moved Noah to 'prepare an ark to the saving of his house.' Such an one will likewise feel *sorrow;* not however 'the sorrow of the world which worketh death,' but that godly sorrow which worketh repentance. Such an one is said to be driven to *despair* by this doctrine; but it is the despair of his own ability to save himself; it is that wholesome despair of his own merits produced by conviction and humility which drives him to seek a better refuge; and such an one is in a proper state to receive the glorious doctrine we are next about to contemplate, namely,

THAT GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVED ON HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE.

Of this doctrine it is of the last importance to form just views, for as it is the only doctrine which can keep the humble penitent from despair, so, on the other hand, great care must be taken that false views of it do not lead us to presumption. In order to understand it rightly, we must not fill our minds with our own reasonings upon it, which is the way in which some good people have been misled, but we must betake ourselves to the Scriptures, wherein we shall find the doctrine stated so plainly as to show that the mistakes have not arisen from a want of clearness in the Scriptures, but from a desire to make it bend to some favourite notions. While it has been totally rejected by some, it has been so mutilated by others, as hardly to retain any resemblance to the Scripture doctrine of redemption. We are told in the beautiful passage last quoted *the source*—the love of God to a lost world;—*who* the Redeemer was—the Son of God;—the *end* for which this plan was formed and executed—'that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'–As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.'—'He would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.'—'He would not have any perish, but that all should come to repentance.' There is nothing surely in all this to promote gloominess. On the contrary, if kindness and mercy have a tendency to win and warm the heart, here is every incentive to joy and cheerfulness. Christianity looks kindly towards all, and with peculiar tenderness on such as, from humbling views of their own unworthiness, might be led to fancy themselves excluded:—we are expressly told, that 'Christ died for *all*:'—that 'he tasted death for *every* man;'—that 'he died for the sins of the *whole world*.' Accordingly he has commanded that his gospel should be 'preached to *every creature*;' which is in effect declaring, that not a single human being is excluded: for to preach the gospel is to offer a Saviour:—and the Saviour in the plainest language offers himself to all,—declaring to 'all the ends of the earth,'—'Look unto me and be saved.' It is therefore an undeniable truth, that no one will perish for the *want* of a Saviour, but for *rejecting* him. That none are excluded who do not exclude themselves, as many unhappily do, who 'reject the counsel of God against themselves, and so receive the grace of God in vain.'

But to suppose that because Christ has *died* for the 'sins of the whole world,' the whole world will therefore be *saved*, is a most fatal mistake. In the same book which tells us that 'Christ died for all,' we have likewise this awful admonition; 'Strait is the gate, and *few* there be that find it;' which, whether it be understood of the immediate reception of the gospel, or of

the final use which was too likely to be made of it, gives no encouragement to hope that *all* will be qualified to partake of its promises. And whilst it declares that 'there is no other name whereby we may be saved but the name of Jesus;' it likewise declares

THAT 'WITHOUT HOLINESS NO MAN SHALL SEE THE LORD.'

It is much to be feared that some, in their zeal to defend the gospel doctrines of free grace, have materially injured the gospel doctrine of holiness: stating that Christ has done all in such a sense, as that there is nothing left for us to do.—But do the Scriptures hold out this language?—'Come, for all things are ready,' is the gospel call; in which we may observe, that at the same time that it tells us that 'all things are ready,' it nevertheless tells us that we must '*come*' Food being *provided* for us will not benefit us except we *partake* of it. It will not avail us that 'Christ our passover is *sacrificed* for us,' unless 'we *keep* the feast.'—We must *make use* of 'the fountain which is opened for sin and uncleanness,' if we would be *purified*. 'All, indeed, who are *athirst* are invited to take of the waters of life freely;' but if we feel no '*thirst*;' if we do not *drink*, their saving qualities are of no avail.

It is the more necessary to insist on this in the present day, as there is a worldly and fashionable, as well as a low and sectarian Antinomianism: there lamentably prevails in the world an unwarranted assurance of salvation, founded on a slight, vague, and general confidence in what Christ has done and suffered for us, as if the great object of his doing and suffering had been to emancipate *us* from all obligations to duty and obedience; and as if, because he died for sinners, we might therefore safely and comfortably go on to live in sin, contenting ourselves with now and then a transient, formal, and unmeaning avowal of our unworthiness, our obligation, and the all-sufficiency of *his* atonement. By the discharge of this quit-rent, of which all the cost consists in acknowledgment, the sensual, the worldly, and the vain hope to find a refuge in heaven, when driven from the enjoyment of this world. But this cheap and indolent Christianity is no where taught in the Bible. The faith inculcated *there* is not a lazy, professional faith, but that faith which 'produceth *obedience*,' that faith which 'worketh by ove,' that faith of which the practical language is—'*Strive* that you may 'enter in;' 'So *run* that you may obtain;'—'So *fight* that you may lay hold on eternal life:'—that faith which directs us 'not to be weary in well-doing;'—which says, '*work* out your own salvation:'—never forgetting at the same time, 'that it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do.' The contrary doctrine is implied in the very name of the Redeemer; 'And his name shall be called 'Jesus, for he shall save his people *from* their sins,' not *in* their sins.—Are those rich supplies of grace which the gospel offers; are those abundant aids of the Spirit which it promises, tendered to the *slothful*?—No. God will have all his gifts improved. Grace must be used, or it will be withdrawn. The Almighty thinks it not derogatory to his free grace to declare, that 'those only who do his commandments have right to the tree of life.' And the scriptures represent it as not derogatory to the *sacrifice* of Christ, to follow his example in well-doing. The only caution is, that we must not work in our own strength, nor bring in our contribution of works as if in aid of the supposed deficiency of His merits.

For we must not in our *over-caution* fancy, that because Christ has 'redeemed us from the curse of the law,' we are therefore without a law. In acknowledging Christ as a deliverer, we must not forget that he is a law-giver too, and that we are expressly commanded 'to fulfil the law of Christ:' if we wish to know what his laws are, we must 'search the Scriptures,' especially the New Testament; there we shall find him declaring

THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF A CHANGE OF HEART AND LIFE.

Our Saviour says, that 'except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God:' that it is not a mere acknowledging His authority, calling him 'Lord, Lord,' that will avail any thing, except we DO what He commands; that any thing short of this is like a man building his house upon the sand, which when the storms come on, will certainly fall. In like manner the apostles are continually enforcing the necessity of this change, which they describe under the various names of 'the new man;'*—'the new creature;'†—'a transformation into the image of God;'‡—'a participation of the divine nature.'§ Nor is this change represented as consisting merely in a change of religious opinions, not even in being delivered over from a worse to a better system of doctrines, nor in exchanging gross sins for those which are more sober and reputable: nor in renouncing the sins of youth, and assuming those of a quieter period of life; nor in leaving off evil practices because men are grown tired of them, or find they injure their credit, health, or fortune; nor does it consist in inoffensiveness and obliging manners, nor indeed in any merely *outward* reformation.

But the change consists in 'being renewed in the spirit of our minds;' in being 'conformed to the image of the Son of God:' in being 'called out of darkness into his marvellous light.' And the whole of this great change, its beginning, progress, and final accomplishment (for it is represented as a *gradual* change) is ascribed to

THE INFLUENCES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

We are perpetually reminded of our utter inability to help ourselves, that we may set the higher value on those gracious aids which are held out to us. We are taught that 'we are not sufficient to *think* any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.' And when we are told that 'if we live after the flesh, we shall die, we are at the same time reminded, that it is 'through the *Spirit* that 'we must mortify the

* Ephesians, iv. 24. † Galatians, vi. 15.
‡ 2 Corinthians, xii. § 2 Peter, i. 4

deeds of the body.' We are likewise cautioned that we 'grieve not the Holy Spirit of God,' 'that we quench not the Spirit.' By all which expressions, and many others of like import, we are taught that, while we are to ascribe with humble gratitude every good thought, word, and work, to the influence of the Holy Spirit, we are not to look on such influence as superseding our own exertions; and it is too plain that we *may* reject the gracious offers of assistance, since otherwise there would be no occasion to caution us *not* to do it. The scriptures have illustrated this in terms which are familiar indeed, but which are therefore only the more condescending and endearing. 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.' Observe, it is not said, if any man will not listen to me, I will force open the door. But if we refuse admittance to such a guest, we must abide by the consequences.

The sublime doctrine of divine assistance is the more to be prized not only on account of our own helplessness, but from the additional consideration of the powerful adversary with whom the Christian has to contend: an article of our faith by the way, which is growing into general disrepute among the politer class of society. Nay, there is a kind of ridicule attached to the very suggestion of the subject, as if it were exploded by general agreement, on full proof of its being an absolute absurdity, utterly repugnant to the liberal spirit of an enlightened age. And it requires no small neatness of expression and periphrastic ingenuity to get the very mention tolerated;—I mean

THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF THE EXISTENCE AND POWER OF OUR GREAT SPIRITUAL ENEMY.

This is considered by the fashionable sceptic as a vulgar invention, which ought to be banished with the belief in dreams, and ghosts and witchcraft:—by the fashionable Christian, as an ingenious allegory, but not as a literal truth; and by almost all, as a doctrine which, when it happens to be introduced at church, has at least nothing to do with the *pews*, but is by common consent made over to the *aisles*, if indeed it must be retained at all.

May I, with great humility and respect, presume to suggest to our divines that they would do well not to lend their countenance to the modish curtailments of the Christian faith: nor to shun the introduction of this doctrine whenever it consists with their subject to bring it forward! A truth which is seldom brought before the eye, imperceptibly grows less and less important; and if it be an unpleasing truth, we grow more and more reconciled to its absence, till at length its intrusion becomes offensive, and we learn in the end to renounce what we at first only neglected. Because some coarse and ranting enthusiasts have been fond of using tremendous terms and awful denunciations with a violence and frequency, which might make it seem to be a gratification to them to denounce judgments and anticipate torments, can *their* coarseness or vulgarity make a true doctrine false, or an important one trifling? If such preachers have given offence by their uncouth manner of managing an awful doctrine, that indeed furnishes a caution to treat the subject more discreetly, but it is no just reason for avoiding the doctrine. For to keep a truth out of sight because it has been absurdly handled or ill-defended, might in time be assigned as a reason for keeping back, one by one, every doctrine of our holy church; for which of them has not occasionally had imprudent advocates or weak champions?

Be it remembered that the doctrine in question is not only interwoven by allusion, implication, or direct assertion throughout the whole scripture, but that it stands prominently *personified* at the opening of the New as well as the Old Testament. The devil's temptation of our Lord, in which he is not represented figuratively, but visibly and palpably, stands exactly on the same ground of authority with other events which are received without repugnance. And it may not be an unuseful observation to remark, that the very refusing to believe in an evil spirit, may be considered as one of his own suggestions; for there is not a more dangerous illusion than to believe ourselves out of the reach of illusions, nor a more alarming temptation than to fancy that we are not liable to be tempted.

But the dark cloud raised by this doctrine will be dispelled by the cheering certainty that our blessed Saviour having himself 'been tempted like as we are, is able to deliver those who are tempted.'

To return.—From this imperfect sketch we may see how suitable the religion of Christ is to fallen man! How exactly it meets every want! No one needs now perish because he is a sinner, provided he be willing to forsake his sins; for 'Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;' and 'He is now exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sin.' Which passage, be it observed may be considered as pointing out to us the *order* in which he bestows his blessings; he gives first *repentance* and then *forgiveness*.

We may likewise see how much the character of a true Christian rises above every other; that there is a wholeness, an integrity, a completeness in the Christian character, that a few natural, pleasing qualities, not cast in the mould of the Gospel, are but as beautiful fragments, or well-turned single limbs, which for want of that beauty, which arises from the proportion of parts, for want of that connexion of the members with the living head, are of little comparative excellence. There may be amiable qualities which are not Christian graces; and the apostle, after enumerating every separate article of attack or defence with which a Christian warrior is to be accoutred, sums up the matter by directing that we put on 'the *whole* armour of God.' And this *completeness* is insisted on by all the apostles. One prays that his converts may 'stand *perfect* and *complete* in the whole will of God;' another enjoins that they 'be *perfect* and *entire*, wanting nothing.'

Now we are not to suppose that they expected any convert to be *without faults;* they knew too well the constitution of the human heart to form so unfounded an expectation. But Chris-

tians must have no fault in their *principle;* their views must be correct, their proposed *scheme* must be faultless; their intention must be single: their *standard* must be lofty; their *object* must be right; their *mark* must be the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'—There must be no *allowed* evil, no *warranted* defection, no *tolerated* impurity, no *habitual* irregularity. Though they do not rise as high as they ought, nor as they wish, in the scale of perfection, yet the scale itself must be correct, and the desire of ascending perpetual; counting nothing done while any thing remains undone. Every grace must be kept in exercise; conquests once made over an evil propensity must not only be maintained but extended. And in truth Christianity so comprizes contrary, and as it may be thought irreconcilable excellences, that those which seem so incompatible as to be incapable by nature of being inmates of the same breast are almost necessarily involved in the Christian character.

For instance; Christianity requires that our faith be at once fervent and sober; that our love be both ardent and lasting; that our patience be not only heroic but gentle; she demands dauntless zeal and genuine humility; active services and complete self-renunciation; high attainments in goodness, with deep consciousness of defect; courage in reproving, and meekness in bearing reproof; a quick perception of what is sinful; with a willingness to forgive the offender; active virtue ready to *do* all, and passive virtue ready to *bear* all. We must stretch every faculty in the service of our Lord, and yet bring every thought into obedience to Him: while we aim to live in the exercise of every Christian grace, we must account ourselves unprofitable servants: we must *strive* for the crown, yet receive it as a *gift*, and then lay it at our Master's feet: while we are busily trading in the world with our Lord's talents, we must 'commune with our hearts, and be still:' while we strive to practise the purest disinterestedness, we must be contented though we meet with selfishness in return; and while laying out our lives for the good of mankind, we must submit to reproach without murmuring, and to ingratitude without resentment. And to render us equal to all these services, Christianity bestows not only the precepts, but the power; she does what the great poet of Ethics lamented that reason could not do, 'she lends us arms as well as rules.'

For here, if not only the worldly and the timid, but the humble and the well-disposed, should demand with fear and trembling, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' Revelation makes its own reviving answer, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.'

It will be well here to distinguish that there are two sorts of Christian professors, one of which affect to speak of Christianity as if it were a mere system of doctrines, with little reference to their influence on life and manners; while the other consider it as exhibiting a scene of human duties independent of its doctrines. For though the latter sort may admit the doctrines, yet they contemplate them as a separate and disconnected set of opinions, rather than as an influential principle of action. In violation of that beautiful harmony which subsists in every part of Scripture between practice and belief the religious world furnishes two sorts of people who seem to enlist themselves, as if in opposition, under the banner of Saint Paul and Saint James; as if those two great champions of the Christian cause had fought for two masters. Those who affect respectively to be the disciples of each, treat faith and works as if they were opposite interests, instead of inseparable points. Nay, they go farther, and set Saint Paul at variance with himself.

Now instead of reasoning on the point, let us refer to the apostle in question, who himself definitely settles the dispute. The apostolic order and method in this respect deserves notice and imitation: for it is observable that the earlier parts of most of the epistles abound in the *doctrines* of Christianity, while those latter chapters, which wind up the subject, exhibit all the duties which grow out of them, as the natural and necessary productions of such a living root.* But this alternate mention of doctrine and practice, which seemed likely to *unite*, has on the contrary formed a sort of line of separation between these two orders of believers, and introduced a broken and mutilated system. Those who would make Christianity consist of doctrines only, dwell for instance, on the first eleven chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, as containing exclusively the sum and substance of the Gospel. While the mere moralists, who wish to strip Christianity of her lofty and appropriate attributes, delight to dwell on the *twelfth* chapter, which is a table of duties, as exclusively as if the preceding chapters made no part of the sacred Canon. But Saint Paul himself, who was at least as sound a theologian as any of his commentators, settles the matter another way, by making the duties of the twelfth grow out of the doctrines of the antecedent *eleven*, just as any other consequence grows out of its cause. And as if he suspected that the indivisible union between them might possibly be overlooked, he links the two distinct divisions together by a logical 'therefore,' with which the twelfth begins: —'I beseech you *therefore*,' (that is, as the effect of all I have been inculcating,) 'that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, acceptable to God,' &c. and then goes on to enforce on them, as a consequence of what he had been preaching, the practice of every Christian virtue. This combined view of the subject seems on the one hand, to be the only means of preventing the substitution of Pagan morality for Christian holiness: and, on the other, of securing the leading doctrine of justification by faith, from the dreadful danger of Antinomian licentiousness; every human obligation being thus grafted on the living stock of a divine principle.

CHAP. XXI.

On the duty and efficacy of prayer.

It is not proposed to enter largely on a topic

* This is the language of our church, as may be seen in her 12th article; viz.
Good works do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree discerned by its fruit.

which has been exhausted by the ablest pens. But as a work of this nature seems to require that so important a subject should not be overlooked, it is intended to notice in a slight manner a few of those many difficulties and popular objections which are brought forward against the use and efficacy of prayer, even by those who would be unwilling to be suspected of impiety and unbelief.

There is a class of objectors who strangely profess to withhold homage from the Most High, not out of contempt but reverence. They affect to consider the use of prayer as derogatory from the omniscience of God, asserting that it looks as if we thought he stood in need of being informed of our wants; and as derogatory from his goodness, as implying that he needs to be put in mind of them.

But is it not enough for such poor frail beings as we are to know, that God himself does not consider prayer as derogatory either to his wisdom or goodness? And shall we erect ourselves into judges of what is consistent with the attributes of Him before whom angels fall prostrate with self-abasement? Will he thank such defenders of his attributes, who, while they profess to reverence, scruple not to disobey him? It ought rather to be viewed as a great encouragement to prayer, that we are addressing a Being, who knows our wants better than we can express them, and whose preventing goodness is always ready to relieve them. Prayer seems to unite the different attributes of the Almighty: for if he is indeed the God that heareth prayer, that is the best reason why 'to him all flesh should come.'

It is objected by another class, and on the specious ground of humility too, though we do not always find the objector himself quite as humble as his plea would be thought, that it is arrogant in such insignificant beings as we are to presume to lay our petty necessities before the Great and Glorious God, who cannot be expected to condescend to the multitude of trifling and even interfering requests which are brought before him by his creatures. These and such like objections arise from mean and unworthy thoughts of the Great Creator. It seems as if those who make them considered the Most High as 'such an one as themselves;' a Being, who can perform a certain given quantity of business, but who would be overpowered with an additional quantity. Or, at best, is it not considering the Almighty in the light, not of an infinite God, but of a great man, of a minister, or a king, who, while he superintends public and national concerns, is obliged to neglect small and individual petitions, because his hands being full he cannot spare that leisure and attention which suffice for every thing? They do not consider him as that infinitely glorious Being, who while he beholds at once all that is doing in heaven and in earth, is at the same time as attentive to the prayer of the poor destitute, as present to the sorrowful sighing of the prisoner, as if each of these forlorn creatures were individually the object of his undivided attention.

These critics, who are for sparing the Supreme Being the trouble of our prayers, and, if I may so speak without profaneness, would relieve Omnipotence of part of his burden, by assigning to his care only such a portion as may be more easily managed, seem to have no adequate conception of his attributes.

They forget that infinite wisdom puts him as easily within reach of all knowledge, as infinite power does of all performance; that he is a Being in whose plans complexity makes no difficulty, variety no obstruction, and multiplicity no confusion; that to ubiquity distance does not exist; that to infinity space is annihilated; that past, present, and future, are discerned more accurately at one glance of his eye, to whom a thousand years are as one day, than a single moment of time or a single point of space can be by ours.

To the other part of the objection, founded on the supposed interference (that is irreconcilableness) of one man's petitions with those of another, this answer seems to suggest itself: first, that we must take care that when we ask, we do not 'ask amiss;' that for instance, we ask chiefly, and in an unqualified manner, only for spiritual blessings to ourselves and others; and in doing this the prayer of one man cannot interfere with that of another, because no proportion of sanctity or virtue implored by one obstructs the same attainments in another. Next in asking for temporal and inferior blessings, we must *qualify* our petition, even though it should extend to deliverance from the severest pains, or to our very life itself, according to that example of our Saviour: 'Father *if it be possible*, let this cup pass from me. *Nevertheless, not my will*, but thine, be done.' By thus qualifying our prayer, we exercise ourselves in an act of resignation to God: we profess not to wish what will interfere with his benevolent plan, and yet we may hope by prayer to secure the blessing so far as it is consistent with it. Perhaps the reason why this objection to prayer is so strongly felt, is the too great disposition to pray for merely temporal and worldly blessings, and to desire them in the most unqualified manner, not submitting to be without them, even though the granting them should be inconsistent with the general plan of Providence.

Another class continue to bring forward, as pertinaciously as if it had never been answered, the exhausted argument, that seeing God is immutable, no petitions of ours can ever change Him: that events themselves being settled in a fixed and unalterable course, and bound in a fatal necessity, it is folly to think that we can disturb the established laws of the universe, or interrupt the course of Providence by our prayers: and that it is absurd to suppose these firm decrees can be reversed by any requests of ours.

Without entering into the wide and trackless field of fate and free will, from which pursuit I am kept back equally by the most profound ignorance and the most invincible dislike, I would only observe, that these objections apply equally to all human action as well as to prayer. It may therefore with the same propriety be urged, that seeing God is immutable and his decrees unalterable, therefore our *actions* can produce no change in Him or in our own state. Weak as well as impious reasoning! It may be questioned whether even the modern French and

German philosophers may not be prevailed upon to acknowledge the existence of God, if they might make such a use of his attributes. The truth is (and it is a truth discoverable without any depth of learning) all these objections are the offspring of *pride*. Poor short-sighted man cannot reconcile the omniscience and decrees of God with the efficacy of prayer; and because *he* cannot reconcile them, he modestly concludes they are irreconcilable. How much more wisdom, as well as happiness, results from an humble Christian spirit! Such a plain practical text as, 'Draw near unto God, and he will draw near unto you,' carries more consolation, more true knowledge of his wants and their remedy to the heart of a penitent sinner, than all the 'tomes of casuistry,' which have puzzled the world ever since the question was first set afloat by its original propounders.

And as the plain man only got up and walked, to prove there was such a thing as motion, in answer to the philosopher who in an elaborate theory denied it: so the plain Christian, when he is borne down with the assurance that there is no efficacy in prayer, requires no better argument to repel the assertion, than the good he finds in prayer itself.

All the doubts proposed to him respecting God, do not so much affect him, as this one doubt respecting himself: 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.' For the chief doubt and difficulty of a real Christian consists, not so much of a distrust of God's ability and willingness to answer the prayer of the upright, as in a distrust of his own uprightness, as in a doubt whether he himself belongs to that description of persons to whom the promises are made, and of the quality of the prayer which he offers up.

Let the subjects of a dark fate maintain a sullen, or the slaves of a blind chance a hopeless silence, but let the child of a compassionate Almighty Father supplicate His mercies with a humble confidence, inspired by the assurance, that 'the very hairs of his head are numbered.' Let him take comfort in that individual and minute attention, without which not a sparrow falls to the ground, as well as in that heart-cheering promise; that, as 'the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous,' so are 'his ears open to their prayers.' And as a pious bishop has observed, 'Our Saviour has as it were hedged in and inclosed the Lord's prayer with these two great fences of our faith, God's *willingness* and his *power* to help us;' the preface to it assures us of the one, which by calling God by the tender name of 'Our Father,' intimates his *readiness* to help his children: and the animating conclusion, 'Thine is the *power*,' rescues us from every unbelieving doubt of his *ability* to help us.

A Christian knows, because he feels, that prayer is, though in a way to him inscrutable, the medium of connexion between God and his rational creatures: the means appointed by him to draw down his blessings upon us. The Christian knows that prayer is the appointed means of uniting two ideas, one of the highest magnificence, the other of the most profound lowliness, within the compass of imagination; namely, that it is the link of communication between 'the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, and that heart of the 'contrite in which he delights to dwell.' He knows that this inexplicable union between beings so unspeakably, so essentially different, can only be maintained by prayer: that this is the strong but secret chain which unites time with eternity, earth with heaven, man with God.

The plain Christian, as was before observed, cannot explain why it is so; but while he *feels* the efficacy, he is content to let the learned *define* it; and he will no more postpone prayer till he can produce a chain of reasoning on the manner in which he derives benefit from it, than he will postpone eating till he can give a scientific lecture on the nature of digestion; he is contented with knowing that his meat has nourished him; and he leaves to the philosopher, who may choose to defer his meal till he has elaborated his treatise, to starve in the interim. The Christian feels better than he is able to explain, that the functions of his spiritual life can no more be carried on without habitual prayer, than those of his natural life without frequent bodily nourishment. He feels renovation and strength grow out of the use of the appointed means, as necessarily in the one case as in the other. He feels that the health of his soul can no more be sustained, and its powers kept in continued vigour, by the *prayers* of a distant day, than his body by the *aliment* of a distant day.

But there is one motive to the duty in question, far more constraining to the true believer than all others that can be named; more imperious than any argument on its utility, than any convictions of its efficacy, even than any experience of its consolations. *Prayer is the command of God;* the plain, positive, repeated injunction of the Most High, who declares, He will be inquired of.' This is enough to secure the obedience of the Christian, even though a promise were not, as it always is, attached to the command. But in this case, to our unspeakable comfort, the promise is as clear as the precept: '*Ask*, and ye shall *receive*—seek, and ye shall *find*—Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' This is encouragement enough for the plain Christian. As to the *manner* in which prayer is made to coincide with the general scheme of God's plan in the government of human affairs; how God has left himself at liberty to reconcile our prayer with his own predetermined will, the Christian does not very critically examine, his precise and immediate duty being to pray, and not to examine; and probably this being among the 'secret things which belong to God,' and not to us, it will lie hidden among those numberless mysteries which we shall not fully understand till faith be lost in sight.

In the meantime it is enough for the humble believer to be assured, that the Judge of all the earth is doing right; it is enough for him to be assured in that word of God 'which cannot lie,' of numberless actual instances of the efficacy of prayer in obtaining blessings and averting calamities, both national and individual: it is enough for him to be convinced experimentally,

by that internal evidence, which is perhaps paramount to all other evidence, the comfort he himself has received from prayer when all other comforts have failed:—and above all to end with the same motive with which we began, the only motive indeed which *he* requires for the performance of any duty—it is motive enough for him—that *thus saith the Lord.* For when a serious Christian has once got a plain unequivocal command from his Maker on any point, he never suspends his obedience while he is amusing himself with looking about for subordinate motives of action. Instead of curiously analysing the nature of the duty, he considers how he shall best fulfil it: for on these points at least it may be said without controversy that 'the ignorant (and here who is *not* ignorant?) *have nothing to do with the law but to obey it?*

Others there are, who, perhaps not controverting any of the premises, yet neglect to build practical consequences on the admisssion of them, who neither denying the duty nor the efficacy of prayer, yet go on to live either in the irregular observance or the total neglect of it, as appetite, or pleasure, or business, or humour, may happen to predominate; and who by living almost without prayer, may be said 'to live almost without God in the world.' To such we can only say, that they little know what they lose.—The time is hastening on when they will look upon those blessings as invaluable, which now they think not worth asking for; when they will bitterly regret the absence of those means and opportunities which now they either neglect or despise. 'O that they were wise! that they understood this! that they would consider their latter end!'

There are again others, who it is to be feared having once lived in the habit of prayer, yet not having been well grounded in those principles of faith and repentance on which genuine prayer is built, have by degrees totally discontinued it. 'They do not find,' say they, 'that their affairs prosper the better or the worse; or perhaps they were unsuccessful in their affairs even before they dropped the practice, and so had no encouragement to go on.' They do not *know* that they had no encouragement; they do not *know* how much worse their affairs might have gone on, had they discontinued it sooner, or how their prayers helped to retard their ruin. Or they do not *know* that perhaps 'they asked amiss,' or that if they had obtained what they asked, they might have been far more unhappy. For a true believer never 'restrains prayer' because he is not certain he obtains every individual request; for he is persuaded that God, in compassion to our ignorance, sometimes in great mercy withholds what we desire, and often disappoints his most favoured children by giving them, not what they ask, but what he knows is really good for them. The froward child, as a pious prelate* observes, cries for the shining blade, which the tender parent withholds, knowing it would cut his fingers.

Thus to persevere when we have not the encouragement of visible success, is an evidence of tried faith. Of this holy perseverance Job was a noble instance. Defeat and disappointment rather stimulated than stopped *his* prayers. Though in a vehement strain of passionate eloquence he exclaims, 'I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard; I cry aloud, but there is no judgment,' yet so persuaded was he, notwithstanding, of the duty of continuing this holy importunity, that he persisted against all human hope, till he attained to that exalted pitch of unshaken faith, by which he was enabled to break out into that sublime apostrophe, 'Though he slay me, yet I will trust in him.'

But may we not say that there is a considerable class, who not only bring none of the objections which we have stated against the use of prayer; who are so far from rejecting, that they are exact and regular in the performance of it; who yet take it up on as low ground as is consistent with their ideas of their own safety; who while they consider prayer as an indispensable form, believe nothing of that change of heart and of those holy tempers which it is intended to produce? Many who yet adhere scrupulously to the letter, are so far from entering into the spirit of this duty, that they are strongly inclined to suspect those of hypocrisy who adopt the true scriptural views of prayer. Nay, as even the Bible may be so wrested as to be made to speak almost any language in support of almost any opinion, these persons lay hold on Scripture itself to bear them out in their own slight views of this duty; and they profess to borrow from thence the ground of that censure which they cast on the more serious Christians. Among the many passages which have been made to convey a meaning foreign to their original design, none have been seized upon with more avidity by such persons than the pointed censures of our Saviour on those 'who for a pretence make long prayers;' as well as on those 'who use vain repetitions, and think they shall be heard for much speaking.' Now the things here intended to be reproved, were the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and the ignorance of the heathen, together with the error of all those who depended on the success of their prayers, while they imitated the deceit of the one or the folly of the other. But our Saviour never meant those severe reprehensions should cool or abridge the devotion of pious Christians, to which they do not at all apply.

More or fewer words, however, so little constitute the true value of prayer, that there is no doubt but one of the most affecting specimens on record is the short petition of the publican, full fraught as it is with that spirit of contrition and self-abasement which is the very principle and soul of prayer. And this specimen perhaps is the best model for that sudden lifting up of the heart which we call ejaculation. But I doubt, in general, whether those few hasty words to which these frugal petitioners would stint the scanty devotions of others and themselves, will be always found ample enough to satisfy the humble penitent, who, being a sinner, has much to confess; who, hoping he is a pardoned sinner, has much to acknowledge. Such an one perhaps cannot always pour out the fulness of his soul within the prescribed abridg

* Bishop Hall.

ments. Even the sincerest Christian, when he wishes to find his heart warm, has often to lament its coldness. Though he feel that he has received much, and has therefore much to be thankful for, yet he is not able at once to bring his wayward spirit into such a posture as shall fit it for the solemn business; for such an one has not merely his form to repeat; but he has his tempers to reduce to order; his affections to excite, and his peace to make. His thoughts may be realizing the sarcasm of the prophet on the idol Baal, 'they may be gone a journey,' and must be recalled; his heart perhaps 'sleepeth and must be awaked.' A devout supplicant too will labour to affect and warm his mind with a sense of the great and gracious attributes of God, in imitation of the holy men of old. Like Jehosaphat, he will sometimes enumerate 'the power, and the might, and the mercies of the Most High,' in order to stir up the sentiments of awe, and gratitude, and love, and humility in his own soul.* He will labour to imitate the example of his Saviour, whose heart dilated with the expression of the same holy affections. 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth.' A heart thus animated, thus warmed with divine love, cannot always scrupulously limit itself to the mere *business* of prayer, if I may so speak. It cannot content itself with merely spreading out its own necessities, but expands in contemplating the perfections of Him to whom he is addressing them. The humble supplicant, though he be no longer *governed* by a love of the world, yet grieves to find that he cannot totally exclude it from his thoughts. Though he has on the whole a deep sense of his own wants, and of the abundant provision which is made for them in the Gospel; yet when he most wishes to be rejoicing in those strong motives for love and gratitude, alas! even then he has to mourn his worldliness, his insensibility, his deadness. He has to deplore the littleness and vanity of the objects which are even then drawing away his heart from his Redeemer. The best Christian is but too liable, during the temptations of the day, to be ensnared by 'the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,' and is not always brought without effort to reflect that he is but dust and ashes. How can even good persons who are just come perhaps from listening to the flattery of their fellow-worms, acknowledge before God, without any preparation of the heart, that they are miserable sinners? They require a little time to impress on their own souls the truth of that solemn confession of sin they are making to Him, without which brevity and not length might constitute hypocrisy. Even the sincerely pious have in prayer grievous wanderings to lament, from which others mistakingly suppose the advanced Christian to be exempt. Such wanderings that, as an old divine has observed, it would exceedingly humble a good man, could he, after he had prayed, be made to see his prayers written down, with exact interlineations of all the vain and impertinent thoughts which had thrust themselves in amongst them. So that such an one will indeed, from a strong sense of these distractions, feel deep occasion with the prophet to ask forgiveness for 'the iniquity of his *holy* things:' and would find cause enough for humiliation every night, had he to lament the sins of his prayers only.

* 2 Chron. xv. 5, 6.

We know that such a brief petition as 'Lord help my unbelief,' if the supplicant be in so happy a frame, and the prayer be darted up with such strong faith that his very soul mounts with the petition, may suffice to draw down a blessing which may be withheld from the more prolix petitioner: yet, if by prayer we do not mean a mere form of words, whether they be long or short; if the true definition of prayer be, that it is *the desire of the heart:* if it be that secret communion between God and the soul, which is the very breath and being of religion; then is the Scripture so far from suggesting that short measure of which it is accused, that it expressly says, 'Pray without ceasing'—'Pray evermore'—'I will that men pray every where'—'continue instant in prayer.'

If such 'repetitions' as these objectors reprobate, stir up desires as yet unawakened, or protract affections already excited (for '*vain* repetitions' are such as awaken or express no new desire, and serve no religious purpose) then are 'repetitions not to be condemned. And that our Saviour did not give the warning against 'long prayers and repetitions' in the sense these objections allege, is evident from his own practice; for once we are told 'he continued *all night* in prayer to God.' And again, in the most awful crisis of his life, it is expressly said, 'He prayed the *third* time, using *the same words.*'*

All habits gain by exercise; of course the Christian graces gain force and vigour by being called out, and, as it were, mustered in prayer. Love, faith, and trust in the divine promises, if they were not kept alive by this stated intercourse with God, would wither and die. Prayer is also one great source and chief encourager of holiness. 'If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me.'

Prayer possesses the two-fold property of fighting and preparing the heart to receive the blessings we pray for, in case we should attain them; and of fortifying and disposing it to submit to the will of God, in case it should be his pleasure to withhold them.

A sense of sin should be so far from keeping us from prayer, through a false plea of unworthiness, that the humility growing on this very consciousness is the truest and strongest incentive to prayer. There is, for our example and encouragement, a beautiful union of faith and humility in the prodigal—'I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.' This as it might seem to imply hopelessness of pardon, might be supposed to promote unwillingness to ask it; but the heart-broken penitent drew the direct contrary conclusion—'I will arise and go to my father!'

Prayer, to make it accepted, requires neither genius, eloquence, nor language; but sorrow for sin, faith, and humility. It is the cry of distress, the sense of want, the abasement of contrition, the energy of gratitude. It is not an elaborate string of well arranged periods nor an

* Matt. xxvi. 44.

exercise of ingenuity, nor an effort of the memory; but the devout breathing of a soul struck with a sense of its own misery, and of the infinite holiness of Him whom it is addressing; experimentally convinced of its own emptiness, and of the abundant fulness of God. It is the complete renunciation of self, and the entire dependence on another. It is the voice of a beggar who would be relieved; of the sinner who would be pardoned. It has nothing to offer but sin and sorrow; nothing to ask but forgiveness and acceptance; nothing to plead but the promises of the Gospel in the death of Christ. It never seeks to obtain its object by diminishing the guilt of sin, but by exalting the merits of the Saviour.

But as it is the effect of prayer to *expand* the affections as well as to *sanctify* them; the benevolent Christian is not satisfied to commend himself alone to the divine favour. The heart which is full of the love of God will overflow with love to its neighbour. All that are near to himself he wishes to bring near to God. He will present the whole human race as objects of divine compassion; but especially the faithful followers of Jesus Christ. Religion makes a man so liberal of soul, that he cannot endure to restrict any thing, much less divine mercies, to himself: he therefore spiritualizes the social affections, by adding intercessory to personal prayer; for he knows that petitioning for others is one of the best methods of exercising and enlarging our own love and charity, even if it were not to draw down those blessings which are promised to those for whom we ask them. It is unnecessary to produce any of the numberless instances with which Scripture abounds, on the efficacy of intercession: in which God has proved the truth of his own assurance, that 'his ear was open to their cry.' I shall confine myself to a few observations on the benefits it brings to him who offers it. When we pray for the object of our dearest regard, it purifies passion, and exalts love into religion; when we pray for those with whom we have worldly intercourse, it smooths down the swellings of envy, and bids the tumults of anger and ambition subside: when we pray for our country, it sanctifies patriotism: when we pray for those in authority, it adds a divine motive to human obedience: when we pray for our enemies, it softens the savageness of war and molifies hatred into tenderness, and resentment into sorrow. And we can only learn the duty so difficult to human nature, of forgiving those who have offended us, when we bring ourselves to pray for them to Him whom we ourselves daily offend. When those who are the faithful followers of the same Divine Master pray for each other, the reciprocal intercession delightfully realizes that beautiful idea of 'the communion of saints.' There is scarcely any thing which more enriches the Christian than the circulation of this holy commerce; than the comfort of believing, while he is praying for his Christian friends, that he is also reaping the benefit of their prayers for him.

Some are for confining their intercessions only to the good, as if none but persons of merit were entitled to our prayers. Merit! who has it? Desert! who can plead it? in the sight of God, I mean. Who shall bring his own piety, or the piety of others, in the way of *claim*, before a Being of such transcendant holiness, that 'the heavens are not clean in his sight?' And if we wait for perfect holiness as a preliminary to prayer, when shall such erring creatures pray *at all* to Him 'who chargeth the angels with folly!'

In closing this little work with the subject of intercessory prayer, may the author be allowed to avail herself of the feeling it suggests to her own heart? And while she earnestly implores that Being, who can make the meanest of his creatures instrumental to his glory, to bless this humble attempt to those for whom it was written, may she, without presumption, entreat that this work of Christian charity may be reciprocal; and that those who peruse these pages may put up a petition for her, that in the great day to which we are all hastening, she may not be found to have suggested to others what she herself did not believe, or to have recommended what she did not desire to practice? In that awful day of everlasting decision, may both the reader and the writer be pardoned and accepted, 'not for any works of righteousness which they have done,' but through the merits of the Great Intercessor.

PRACTICAL PIETY,

OR THE INFLUENCE OF

THE RELIGION OF THE HEART

ON THE CONDUCT OF THE LIFE.

The fear of God begins with the Heart, and purifies and rectifies it; and from the Heart, thus rectified, grows a conformity in the Life, the Words, and the Actions.—*Sir Matthew Hale's Contemplations.*

PREFACE.

An eminent professor of our own time modestly declared that he taught chemistry in order that he might learn it. The writer of the following pages might, with far more justice, offer a

similar declaration, as an apology for so repeatedly treating on the important topics of religion and morals

Abashed by the equitable precept,

> Let those teach others who themselves excel—

she is aware, how fairly she is putting it in the power of the reader, to ask, in the searching words of an eminent old prelate, 'They that speak thus, and advise thus, do they do thus?' She can defend herself in no other way, than by adopting for a reply the words of the same venerable divine, which immediately follow:—'O that it were not too true. Yet although it be but little that is attained, the very aim is right, and something there is that is done by it. It is better to have such thoughts and desires, than altogether to give them up; and the very desire, if it be serious and sincere, may so much change the habitude of the soul and life, that it is not to be despised.'

The world does not require so much to be informed as reminded. A remembrancer may be almost as useful as an instructor; if his office be more humble, it is scarcely less necessary. The man whose employment it was, statedly to proclaim in the ear of Philip, REMEMBER THAT THOU ART MORTAL, had his plain admonition been allowed to make its due impression, might have produced a more salutary effect on the royal usurper, than the impassioned orations of his immortal assailant—

> whose resistless eloquence
> Shook th' arsenal and fulmined over Greece
> To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne.

While the orator boldly strove to check the ambition, and arrest the injustice of the king, the simple herald barely reminded him, how short would be the reign of injustice, how inevitable and how near was the final period of ambition. Let it be remembered to the credit of the monarch, that while the thunders of the politician were intolerable, the monitor was of his own appointment.

This slight sketch, for it pretends to no higher name, aims only at being plain and practical. Contending solely for those indispensable points, which by involving present duty, involve future happiness, the writer has avoided, as far as Christian sincerity permits, all controverted topics; has shunned whatever might lead to disputation rather than to profit.

We live in an age, when, as Mr. Pope observed of that in which he wrote, it is criminal to be moderate. Would it could not be said that Religion has her parties as well as politics! Those who endeavour to steer clear of all extremes in either, are in danger of being reprobated by both. It is rather a hardship for persons, who have considered it as a Christian duty to cultivate a spirit of moderation in thinking, and of candour in judging, that, when these dispositions are brought into action, they frequently incur a harsher censure than the errors which it was their chief aim to avoid.

Perhaps, therefore, to that human wisdom whose leading object is human applause, it might answer best to be exclusively attached to some one party. On the protection of that party at least, it might in that case reckon; and it would then have this dislike of the opposite class alone to contend against; while those who cannot go all lengths with either, can hardly escape the disapprobation of both.

To apply the remark to the present case:—The author is apprehensive that she may at once be censured by opposite classes of readers, as being too strict and too relaxed:—too much attached to opinions, and too indifferent about them;—as having narrowed the broad field of Christianity by labouring to establish its peculiar doctrines;—as having broken down its enclosures by not confining herself to doctrines exclusively;—as having considered morality of too little importance;—as having raised it to an undue elevation;—as having made practice every thing;—as having made it nothing.

While a catholic spirit is accused of being latitudinarian in one party, it really *is* so in another. In one it exhibits the character of Christianity on her own grand but correct scale; in the other, it is the offspring of that indifference, which, considering all opinions as nearly of the same value, indemnifies itself for tolerating all, by not attaching itself to any, which, establishing a self-complacent notion of general benevolence, with a view to discredit the narrow spirit of Christianity, and adopting a display of that cheap material, liberal sentiment, as opposed to religious strictness, sacrifices true piety to false candour.

Christianity may be said to suffer between two criminals, but it is difficult to determine by which she suffers most;—whether by that uncharitable bigotry which disguises her divine character, and speculatively adopts the faggot and the flames of inquisitorial intolerance; or by that indiscriminate candour, that conceding slackness, which, by stripping her of her appropriate attributes, reduces her to something scarcely worth contending for; to something which, instead of making her the religion of Christ, generalizes her into any religion which may choose to adopt her.—The one distorts her lovely lineaments into caricature, and throws her graceful figure into gloomy shadow; the other, by daubing her over with colours not her own, renders her form indistinct, and obliterates her features. In the first instance, she excites little affection; in the latter she is not recognized.

The writer has endeavoured to address herself as a Christian who must die soon, to Christians

who must die certainly. She trusts that she shall not be accused of erecting herself into a censor, but be considered as one who writes with a real consciousness that she is far from having reached the attainments she suggests; with a heartfelt conviction of the danger of holding out a standard too likely to discredit her own practice. She writes not with the assumption of superiority, but with a deep practical sense of the infirmities against which she has presumed to caution others. She wishes to be understood as speaking the language of sympathy, rather than of dictation; of feeling rather than of document. So far from fancying herself exempt from the evils on which she has animadverted, her very feeling of those evils has assisted her in their delineation. Thus this interior sentiment of her own deficiencies, which might be urged as a disqualification, has, she trusts, enabled her to point out dangers to others.—If the patient cannot lay down rules for the cure of a reigning disease, much less effect the cure; yet from the symptoms common to the same malady, he who labours under it may suggest the necessity of attending to it. He may treat the case feelingly, if not scientifically. He may substitute experience, in default of skill: he may insist on the value of the remedy he has neglected, as well as recommend that from which he has found benefit.

The subjects considered in this treatise have been animadverted on, have been in a manner exhausted, by persons before whose names the author bows down with the deepest humility; by able professional instructors, by piety adorned with all the graces of style, and invigorated with all the powers of argument.

Why, then, it may be asked, multiply books which may rather incumber the reader than strengthen the cause?—'That the older is better,' cannot be disputed. But is not the being 'old' sometimes the reason why the 'better' is not regarded? Novelty itself is an attraction which but too often supersedes merit. A slighter drapery, if it be a new one, may excite a degree of attention to an object, not paid to it when clad in a richer garb to which the eye has been accustomed.

The author may begin to ask with one of her earliest and most enlightened friends*—'Where is the world into which we were born?' Death has broken most of those connexions which made the honour and happiness of her youthful days. Fresh links however have continued to attach her to society. She is singularly happy in the affectionate regard of a great number of amiable young persons, who may peruse with additional attention, sentiments which come recommended to them by the warmth of their own attachment, more than by any claim of merit in the writer. Is there not something in personal knowledge, something in the feelings of endeared acquaintance, which by that hidden association, whence so much of our undefined pleasure is derived, if it does not impart new force to old truths, may excite a new interest in considering truths which are known? Her concern for these engaging persons extends beyond the transient period of present intercourse. It would shed a ray of brightness on her parting hour, if she could hope that any caution here held out, any principle here suggested, any habit here recommended, might be of use to any one of them, when the hand which now guides the pen, can be no longer exerted in their service. This would be remembering their friend in a way which would evince the highest affection in them, which would confer the truest honour on herself.

Barley Wood, March 1st, 1811.

PRACTICAL PIETY,

OR THE INFLUENCE OF THE RELIGION OF THE HEART ON THE CONDUCT OF THE LIFE.

CHAP. I.

Christianity an internal principle.

Christianity bears all the marks of a divine original. It came down from heaven, and its gracious purpose is to carry us up thither. Its Author is God. It was foretold from the beginning, by prophecies which grew clearer and brighter as they approached the period of their accomplishment. It was confirmed by miracles which continued till the religion they illustrated was established. It was ratified by the blood of its author. Its doctrines are pure, sublime, consistent. Its precepts just and holy. Its worship is spiritual. Its services reasonable, and rendered practicable by offers of divine aid to human weakness. It is sanctioned by the eternal happiness of the faithful, and the everlasting misery to the disobedient. It had no collusion with power, for power sought to crush it. It could not be in any league with the world, for it set out by declaring itself the enemy of the world. It reprobated its maxims, it showed the vanity of its glories, the danger of its riches, the emptiness of its pleasures.

Christianity though the most perfect rule of life that ever was devised, is far from being barely a rule of life. A religion consisting of a mere code of laws, might have sufficed for a man in a state of innocence. But man who has broken these laws cannot be saved by a rule which he has violated. What consolation could he find in the perusal of statutes, every one of which, bringing a fresh conviction of his guilt, brings a fresh assurance of his condemnation The chief object of the Gospel is not to furnish rules for the preservation of innocence, but to hold out the means of salvation to the guilty. It

* Dr. Johnson.

does not proceed from a supposition but a fact, not upon what might have suited man in a state of purity, but upon what is suitable to him in the exigences of his fallen state.

This religion does not consist in an external conformity to practices, which, though right in themselves, may be adopted from human motives, and to answer secular purposes. It is not a religion of forms, and modes, and decencies. It is being transformed into the image of God. It is being like-minded with Christ. It is considering him as our sanctification, as well as our redemption. It is endeavouring to live to him here that we may live with him hereafter. It is desiring earnestly to surrender our will to his, our heart to the conduct of his Spirit, our life to the guidance of his word.

The change in the human heart, which the Scriptures declare to be necessary, they represent to be not so much an old principle improved, as a new one created; not educed out of the former character, but infused into the new one. This change is there expressed in great varieties of language, and under different figures of speech. Its being so frequently described, or figuratively intimated in almost every part of the volume of inspiration, entitles the doctrine itself to reverence, and ought to shield from obloquy the obnoxious terms in which it is sometimes conveyed.

The sacred writings frequently point out the analogy between natural and spiritual things. The same Spirit which in the creation of the world moved upon the face of the waters, operates on the human character to produce a new heart and a new life. By this operation the affections and faculties of the man receive a new impulse—his dark understanding is illuminated, his rebellious will is subdued, his irregular desires are rectified, his judgment is informed, his imagination is chastised, his inclinations are sanctified; his hopes and fears are directed to their true and adequate end. Heaven becomes the object of his hopes, an eternal separation from God the object of his fears. His love of the world is transmuted into the love of God. The lower faculties are pressed into the new service. The senses have a higher direction. The whole internal frame and constitution receive a nobler bent; the intents and purposes of the mind a sublimer aim; his aspirations a loftier flight; his vacillating desires find a fixed object; his vagrant purposes a settled home; his disappointed heart a certain refuge. The heart, no longer a worshipper of the world, is struggling to become its conqueror. Our blessed Redeemer, in overcoming the world, bequeathed us his command to overcome it also: but as he did not give the command without the example, so he did not give the example without the offer of a power to obey the command.

Genuine religion demands not merely an external profession of our allegiance to God, but an inward devotedness of ourselves to his service. It is not a recognition, but a dedication. It puts the Christian into a new state of things, a new condition of being. It raises him above the world while he lives in it. It disperses the illusion of sense, by opening his eyes to realities in the place of those shadows which he has been pursuing. It presents this world as a scene of whose original beauty Sin has darkened and disordered, Man as a dependant creature, Jesus Christ as the repairer of all the evils which sin has caused, and as our restorer to holiness and happiness. Any religion short of this, any at least, which has not this for its end and object, is not that religion, which the Gospel has presented to us, which our Redeemer came down on earth to teach us by his precepts, to illustrate by his example, to confirm by his death, and to consummate by his resurrection.

If Christianity do not always produce these happy effects to the extent here represented, it has always a tendency to produce them. If we do not see the progress to be such as the Gospel annexes to the transforming power of true religion, it is not owing to any defect in the principle, but to the remains of sin in the heart; to the imperfectly subdued corruptions of the Christian. Those who are very sincere are still very imperfect. They evidence their sincerity by acknowledging the lowness of their attainments, by lamenting the remainder of their corruptions. Many an humble Christian whom the world reproaches with being extravagant in his zeal, whom it ridicules for being enthusiastic in his aims, and rigid in his practice, is inwardly mourning on the very contrary ground. He would bear their censure more cheerfully, but that he feels his danger lies in the opposite direction. He is secretly abasing himself before his Maker for not carrying far enough that principle which he is accused of carrying too far. The fault which others find in him is excess. The fault he finds in himself is deficiency. He is, alas! too commonly right. His enemies speak of him as they hear. He judges of himself as he feels. But though humbled to the dust by the deep sense of his own unworthiness, he is, 'strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.' 'He has,' says the venerable Hooker, 'a Shepherd full of kindness, full of care, and full of power.' His prayer is not for reward but pardon. His plea is not merit but mercy; but then it is mercy made sure to him by the promise of the Almighty to penitent believers.

The mistake of many in religion appears to be, that they do not begin with the beginning. They do not lay their foundation in the persuasion that man is by nature in a state of alienation from God. They consider him rather as an imperfect than a fallen creature. They allow that he requires to be improved, but deny that he requires a thorough renovation of heart.

But genuine Christianity can never be grafted on any other stock than the apostacy of man. The design to reinstate beings who have not fallen; to propose a restoration without a previous loss, a cure where there was no radical disease, is altogether an incongruity which would seem too palpable to require confutation, did we not so frequently see the doctrine of redemption maintained by those who deny that man was in a state to require such a redemption. But would Christ have been sent 'to preach deliverence to the captive,' if there had been no captivity; and 'the opening of the prison to

them that were bound,' had there been no prison. nad man been in no bondage?

We are aware that many consider the doctrine in question as a bold charge against oui Creator. But may we not venture to ask, Is it not a bolder charge against God's goodness to presume that he had made beings originally wicked; and against God's veracity to believe, that having made such beings he pronounced them 'good?' Is not that doctrine more reasonable which is expressed or implied in every part of Scripture, that the moral corruption of oui first parent has been entailed on his whole posterity; that from this corruption (though only punishable for their actual offences) they are no more exempt than from natural death?

We must not, however, think falsely of our nature; we must humble but not degrade it. Our original brightness is obscured, but not extinguished. If we consider ourselves in our natural state, our estimation cannot be too low when we reflect at what a price we have been bought, we can hardly overrate ourselves in the view of immortality.

If, indeed, the Almighty had left us to the consequences of our natural state, we might, with more colour of reason, have mutinied against his justice. But when we see how graciously he has turned our very lapse into an occasion of improving our condition; how from this evil he was pleased to advance us to a greater good than we had lost; how that life which was forfeited may be restored; how by grafting the redemption of man on the very circumstance of his fall, he has raised him to the capacity of a higher condition than that which he has forfeited, and to a happiness superior to that from which he fell—What an impression does this give us of the immeasurable wisdom and goodness of God, of the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The religion which it is the object of these pages to recommend, has been sometimes misunderstood, and not seldom misrepresented. It has been described as an unproductive theory, and ridiculed as a fanciful extravagance. For the sake of distinction it is here called, *The religion of the Heart.*—*There* it subsists as the fountain of spiritual life; *thence* it sends forth, as from the central seat of its existence, supplies of life and warmth through the whole frame; *there* is the soul of virtue; *there* is the vital principle which animates the whole being of a Christian.

This religion has been the support and consolation of the pious believer in all ages of the church. That it has been perverted both by the cloistered and the uncloistered mystic, not merely to promote abstraction of mind, but inactivity of life, makes nothing against the principle itself. What doctrine of the New Testament has not been made to speak the language of its injudicious advocate, and turned into arms against some other doctrines which it was never meant to oppose?

But if it has been carried to a blameable excess by the pious error of holy men, it has also been adopted by the less innocent fanatic, and abused to the most pernicious purposes. His extravagance has furnished to the enemies of internal religion, arguments or rather invectives, against the sound and sober exercises of genuine piety They seize every occasion to represent it as if it were criminal, as the foe of morality; ridiculous as the infallible test of an unsound mind, mischievous, as hostile to active virtue, and destructive as the bane of public utility.

But if these charges be really well founded, then were the brightest luminaries of the Christian church—then were Horne, and Porteus, and Beveridge; then were Hooker, and Taylor, and Herbert; Hopkins, Leighton, and Usher; Howe, and Baxter; Ridley, Jewel, and Hooper; then were Chrysostome and Augustine, the reformers and the fathers; then were the goodly fellowship of the prophets; then were the noble army of martyrs; then were the glorious company of the apostles; then was the disciple whom Jesus loved; then was Jesus himself—I shudder at the amplification—dry speculatists, frantic enthusiasts, enemies to virtue, and subverters of the public weal.

Those who disbelieve, or deride, or reject this inward religion, are much to be compassionated. Their belief that no such principle exists, will, it is to be feared, effectually prevent its existing in themselves, at least, while they make their own state the measure of their general judgment. Not being sensible of their required dispositions in their own hearts, they establish this as a proof of its impossibility in all cases. This persuasion, as long as they maintain it, will assuredly exclude the reception of divine truth. What they assert can be true in no case, cannot be true in their own. Their hearts will be barred against any influence in the power of which they do not believe. They will not desire it, they will not pray for it, except in the Liturgy, *where it is the decided language*: They will not addict themselves to those pious exercises to which it invites them, exercises which it ever loves and cherishes. Thus they expect the end, but avoid the way which leads to it; they indulge the hope of glory, while they neglect or pervert the means of grace. But let not the formal religionist, who has probably never sought, and therefore never obtained, any sense of the spiritual mercies of God, conclude that there is, therefore, no such state. His having no conception of it is no more proof that no such state exists, than it is a proof, that the cheering beams of a genial climate have no existence, because the inhabitants of the frozen zone never felt them.

Where our own heart and experience do not illustrate these truths practically, so as to afford us some evidence of their reality, let us examine our minds, and faithfully follow up our convictions; let us inquire whether God has really been wanting in the accomplishment of his promises, or whether we have not been sadly deficient in yielding to those suggestions of conscience which are the motions of his Spirit? Whether we have not neglected to implore the aids of that Spirit; whether we have not, in various instances, resisted them? Let us ask ourselves—have we looked up to our heavenly Father with humble dependence for the supplies of his grace? or have we prayed for these blessings only as a form, and having acquitted ourselves of the form, do we continue to live as if

we had not so prayed? Having repeatedly implored his direction, do we endeavour to submit ourselves to its guidance? Having prayed that his will may be done, do we never stoutly set up our own will in contradiction to his?

If, then, we receive not the promised support and comfort, the failure must rest somewhere: it lies between him who has promised, and him to whom the promise was made. There is no other alternative; would it not be blasphemy to transfer the failure to God? Let us not, then, rest till we have cleared up the difficulty. The spirits sink and the faith fails, if, after a continued round of reading and prayer: after having for years conformed to the letter of the command; after having scrupulously brought in our tale of outward duties, we find ourselves just where we were at setting out.

We complain justly of our own weakness, and truly plead our inability as a reason why we cannot serve God as we ought. This infirmity, its nature, and its measure, God knows far more exactly than we know it; yet he knows that, with the help which he offers us, we can both love and obey him, or he never would have made it the qualification of our obtaining his favour. He never would have said, 'give me thy heart'—'seek ye my face'—'add to your faith, virtue'—'have a right heart and a right spirit,'—'strengthen the things that remain'—'ye will not come to me that ye might have life'—had not all these precepts a definite meaning, had not all those been practicable duties.

Can we suppose that the omniscient God would have given these unqualified commands to powerless, incapable, unimpressible beings? Can we suppose that he would paralyse his creatures, and then condemn them for not being able to move? He knows, it is true, our natural impotence, but he knows, because he confers, our superinduced strength. There is scarcely a command in the whole Scripture which has not either immediately, or in some other part a corresponding prayer, and a corresponding promise. If it says in one place '*get* thee a new heart,'—it says in another 'a new heart will I *give* thee;—and in a third '*make* me a clean heart!' For it is worth observing that a diligent inquirer may trace every where this threefold union. If God *commands* by Saint Paul, 'let not sin reign in your mortal body,' he *promises* by the same apostle, 'sin shall *not* have dominion over you;'—while to complete the tripartate agreement, he makes David *pray* that his 'sins may not have dominion over him.'

The saints of old, so far from setting up on the stock of their own independent virtue, seem to have had no idea of any light but what was imparted, of any strength but what was communicated to them from above. Hear their importunate petitions!—'O send forth thy light and thy truth.'—Mark their grateful declarations! —'The Lord is my strength and my salvation!'—Observe their cordial acknowledgments!—'Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me bless his holy name!'

Though we must be careful not to mistake for the divine Agency those impulses which pretend to operate independently of external revelation; which have little reference to it; which set themselves above it; it is however that powerful agency which sanctifies all means, renders all external revelation effectual. Notwithstanding that all the truths of religion, all the doctrines of salvation are contained in the holy Scriptures, these very scriptures require the influence of that Spirit which dictated them to produce an influential faith. This Spirit, by enlightening the mind, converts the rational persuasion, brings the intellectual conviction of divine truth conveyed in the New Testament, into an operative principle. A man from reading, examining, and inquiring, may attain to such a reasonable assurance of the truth of revelation as will remove all doubts from his own mind, and even enable him to refute the objections of others; but this bare intellectual faith alone will not operate against his corrupt affections, will not cure his besetting sin, will not conquer his rebellious will, and may not therefore be an efficacious principle. A mere historical faith, the mere evidence of facts with the soundest reasonings and deductions from them, may not be that faith which will fill him with all joy and peace in believing.

An habitual reference to that Spirit which animates the real Christian is so far from excluding, that it strengthens the truth of revelation, but never contradicts it. The word of God is always in unison with his Spirit; his Spirit is never in opposition to his word. Indeed that this influence is not an imaginary thing, is confirmed by the whole tenor of Scripture. We are aware that we are treading on dangerous, because disputed ground; for among the fashionable curtailments of Scripture doctrines, there is not one truth which has been lopped from the modern creed with a more unsparing hand; not one, the defence of which excites more suspicion against its advocates. But if it had been a mere phantom, should we with such jealous iteration have been cautioned against neglecting or opposing it? If the Holy Spirit could not be 'grieved,' might it not be 'quenched;' were it not likely to be 'resisted,' that very Spirit which proclaimed the prohibitions would never have said 'grieve not,' 'quench not,' 'resist not.' The Bible never warns us against imaginary evil, nor courts us to imaginary good. If then we refuse to yield to its guidance, if we reject its directions; if we submit not to its gentle persuasions, for such they are, and not arbitrary compulsions, we shall never attain to that peace and liberty which are the privilege, the promised reward of sincere Christians.

In speaking of that peace which passeth understanding, we allude not to those illuminations and raptures, which, if God has in some instances bestowed them, he has no where pledged himself to bestow; but of that rational yet elevated hope which flows from an assured persuasion of the paternal love of our heavenly Father; of that 'secret of the Lord,' which he himself assured us 'is with them that fear him;' of that life and power of religion which are the privilege of those 'who abide under the shadow of the Almighty;' of those who 'know in whom they have believed;' of those 'who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit;' of those 'who endure as seeing him who is invisible.'

Many faults may be committed where there is nevertheless a sincere desire to please God. Many infirmities are consistent with a cordial love of our Redeemer. Faith may be sincere where it is not strong. But he who can conscientiously say that he seeks the favour of God above every earthly good; that he delights in his service incomparably more than in any other gratification; that to obey him here and to enjoy his presence hereafter is the prevailing desire of his heart; that his chief sorrow is that he loves him no more and serves him no better, such a man requires no evidence that his heart is changed, and his sins forgiven.

For the happiness of the Christian does not consist in mere feeling which may deceive, nor in frames which can be only occasional; but in a settled, calm conviction that God and eternal things have the predominance in his heart; in a clear perception that they have, though with much alloy of infirmity, the supreme, if not undisturbed possession of his mind; in an experimental persuasion that his chief remaining sorrow is, that he does not surrender himself with so complete an acquiescence as he ought to his convictions. These abatements, though sufficient to keep us humble, are not powerful enough to make us happy.

The true measure then to be taken of our state is from a perceptible change in our desires, tastes, and pleasures; from a sense of progress, however small, in holiness of heart and life. This seems to be the safest rule of judging, for if mere feeling were allowed to be the criterion, the presumptuous world would be inflated with spiritual pride from the persuasion of enjoying them; while the humble from their very humility, might be as unreasonably depressed at wanting such evidences.

The recognition of this divine aid then, involves no presumption, raises no illusion, causes no inflation: it is sober in its principle and rational in its exercise. In establishing the law of God it does not reverse the law of nature, for it leaves us in full possession of those natural faculties which it improves and sanctifies; and so far from inflaming the imagination, its proper tendency is to subdue and regulate it.

A security which outruns our attainments is a most dangerous state, yet it is a state most unwisely coveted. The probable way to be safe hereafter, is not to be presumptuous now. If God graciously vouchsafe us inward consolation, it is only to animate us to farther progress. It is given us for support in our way, and not for settled maintenance in our present condition. If the promises are our aliment, the commandments are our works; and a temperate Christian ought to desire nourishment only in order to carry him through his business. If he so supinely rest on the one as to grow sensual and indolent, he might become not only unwilling, but incapacitated for the performance of the other. We must not expect to live upon cordials, which only serve to inflame without strengthening. Even without these supports, which we are more ready to desire than to put ourselves in the way to obtain, there is an inward peace in an humble trust in God, and in a simple reliance on his word; there is a repose of spirit, a freedom from solicitude in a lowly confidence in him, for which the world has nothing to give in exchange.

On the whole then, the state which we have been describing is not the dream of the enthusiast; it is not the revery of the visionary, who renounces prescribed duties for fanciful speculations, and embraces shadows for realities; but it is that sober earnest of Heaven, that reasonable anticipation of eternal felicity which God is graciously pleased to grant, not partially, nor arbitrarily, but to *all* who diligently seek his face, to *all* to whom his service is freedom, his will a law, his word a delight, his Spirit a guide; to all who love him unfeignedly, to all who devote themselves to him unreservedly, to all who with deep self-abasement, yet with filial confidence, prostrate themselves at the foot of his throne, saying, Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us and we shall be safe.

CHAP. II.

Christianity a practical principle.

If God be the author of our spiritual life, the root from which we derive the vital principle, with daily supplies to maintain this vitality; then the best evidence we can give that we have received something of this principle, is an unreserved dedication of ourselves to the actual promotion of his glory. No man ought to flatter himself that he is in the favour of God, whose life is not consecrated to the service of God. Will it not be the only unequivocal proof of such a consecration, that he be more zealous of good works than those who, disallowing the principle, on which he performs them, do not even pretend to be actuated by any such motive?

The finest theory never yet carried any man to heaven. A religion of notions which occupies the mind, without filling the heart, may obstruct, but cannot advance the salvation of men. If these notions are false, they are most pernicious; if true and not operative, they aggravate guilt; if unimportant though not unjust, they occupy the place which belongs to nobler objects, and sink the mind below its proper level; substituting the things which only ought not to be left undone, in the place of those which ought to be done; and causing the grand essentials not to be done at all. Such a religion is not that which Christ came to teach mankind.

All the doctrines of the gospel are practical principles. The word of God was not written, the Son of God was not incarnate, the Spirit of God was not given, only that Christians might obtain right views, and possess just notions. Religion is something more than mere correctness of intellect, justness of conception, and exactness of judgment. It is a life-giving principle. It must be infused into the habit, as well as govern the understanding; it must regulate the will as well as direct the creed. It must not only cast the opinions into a new frame, but the heart into a new mould. It is a transforming as well as a penetrating principle. It changes the taste, gives activity to the inclinations, and together with a new heart produces a new life.

Christianity enjoins the same temper, the same spirit, the same dispositions, on all its real professors. The act, the performance, must depend on circumstances which do not depend on us. The power of doing good is withheld from many, from whom, however, the reward will not be withheld. If the external act constituted the whole value of Christian virtue, then must the author of all good be himself the author of injustice, by putting it out of the power of multitudes to fulfil his own commands. In principles, in tempers, in fervent desires, in holy endeavours, consist the very essence of Christian duty.

Nor must we fondly attach ourselves to the practice of some particular virtue, or value ourselves exclusively on some favourite quality; nor must we wrap ourselves up in the performance of some individual actions, as if they formed the sum of Christian duty. But we must embrace the whole law of God in all its aspects, bearings and relations. We must bring no fancies, no partialities, no prejudices, no exclusive choice or rejection into our religion, but take it as we find it, and obey it as we receive it, as it is exhibited in the Bible without addition, curtailment, or adulteration.

Nor must we pronounce on a character by a single action really bad, or apparently good; if so, Peter's denial would render him the object of our execration, while we should have judged favourably of the prudent economy of Judas. The catastrophe of the latter, who does not know? while the other became a glorious martyr to that master, whom, in a moment of infirmity he had denied.

A piety altogether spiritual, disconnected with all outward circumstances; a religion of pure meditation and abstracted devotion, was not made for so compound, so imperfect a creature as man. There have, indeed, been a few sublime spirits, not 'touched but rapt,' who totally cut off from the world, seem almost to have literally soared above this terrene region, who almost appear to have stolen the fire of the Seraphim, and to have had no business on earth, but to keep alive the celestial flame. They would, however, have approximated more nearly to the example of their divine master, the great standard and only perfect model, had they combined a more diligent discharge of the active duties and benefices of life with their high devotional attainments.

But while we are in little danger of imitating, let us not too harshly censure the pious error of these sublimated spirits. Their number is small. Their example is not catching. Their ethereal fire is not likely, by spreading, to inflame the world. The world will take due care not to come in contact with it, while its distant light and warmth may cast, accidentally, a not unuseful ray on the cold-hearted and the worldly.

But from this small number of refined but inoperative beings, we do not intend to draw our notions of practical piety. God did not make a religion for these few exceptions to the general state of the world, but for the world at large; for beings active, busy, restless; whose activity, he, by his word, diverts into its proper channels; whose busy spirit is there directed to the common good; whose restlessness, indicating the unsatisfactoriness of all they find on earth, he points to a higher destination. Were total seclusion and abstraction designed to have been the general state of the world, God would have given man other laws, other rules, other faculties, and other employments.

There is a class of visionary but pious writers who seem to shoot as far beyond the mark, as mere moralists fall short of it.—Men of low views and gross minds may be said to be wise *below* what is written, while those of too subtle refinement are wise *above* it. The one grovel in the dust from the inertness of their intellectual faculties; while the others are lost in the clouds by stretching them beyond their appointed limits. The one build spiritual castles in the air, instead of erecting them on the 'holy ground' of Scripture; the other lay their foundation in the sand instead of resting it on the Rock of Ages. Thus, the superstructure of both is equally unsound.

God is the fountain from which all the streams of goodness flow; the centre from which all the rays of blessedness diverge.—All our actions are, therefore, only good, as they have a reference to Him: the streams must revert back to their fountain, the rays must converge again to their centre.

If love of God be the governing principle, this powerful spring will actuate all the movements of the rational machine. The essence of religion does not so much consist in actions as affections. Though right actions, therefore, as from an excess of courtesy they are commonly termed, may be performed where there are no right affections; yet are they a mere carcass; utterly destitute of the soul, and, therefore, of the substance of virtue. But neither can affections substantially and truly subsist without producing right actions; for never let it be forgotten that a pious inclination which has not life and vigour sufficient to ripen into act when the occasion presents itself, and a right action which does not grow out of a sound principle, will neither of them have any place in the account of real goodness. A good inclination will be contrary to sin, but a mere inclination will not subdue sin.

The love of God, as it is the source of every right action and feeling, so it is the only principle which necessarily involves the love of our fellow creatures. As man we do not love man. There is a love of partiality but not of benevolence; of sensibility but not of philanthropy; of friends and favourites, of parties and societies, but not of man collectively. It is true we may, and do, without this principle, relieve his distresses, but we do not bear with his faults. We may promote his fortune, but we do not forgive his offences; above all, we are not anxious for his immortal interests. We could not see him want without pain, but we can see him sin without emotion. We could not hear of a beggar perishing at our door without horror, but we can, without concern, witness an acquaintance dying without repentance. Is it not strange that we must participate something of the divine nature, before we can really love the human? It seems, indeed, to be an insensibility to sin,

rather than want of benevolence to mankind that makes us naturally pity their temporal, and be careless of their spiritual wants; but does not this very insensibility proceed from the want of love to God?

As it is the habitual frame, and predominating disposition, which are the true measure of virtue, incidental good actions are no certain criterion of the state of the heart; for who is there, who does not occasionally do them? Having made some progress in attaining this disposition, we must not sit down satisfied with propensities and inclinations to virtuous actions, while we rest short of their actual exercise. If the principle be that of sound Christianity, it will never be inert. While we shall never do good with any great effect, till we labour to be conformed, in some measure, to the image of God; we shall best evince our having obtained something of that conformity, by a course of steady and active obedience to God.

Every individual should bear in mind, that he is sent into this world to act a part in it. And though one may have a more splendid, and another a more obscure part assigned him, yet the actor of each is equally, is awfully accountable. Though God is not a hard, he is an exact master. His service, though not a severe, is a reasonable service. He accurately proportions his requisitions to his gifts. If he does not expect that one talent should be as productive as five, yet to a single talent a proportionable responsibility is annexed.

He who has said 'Give me thy heart,' will not be satisfied with less; he will not accept the praying lips, nor the mere hand of charity as substitutes.

A real Christian will be more just, sober, and charitable than other men, though he will not rest for salvation on justice, sobriety, or charity. He will perform the duties they enjoin, in the spirit of Christianity, as instances of devout obedience, as evidences of a heart devoted to God.

All virtues, it cannot be too often repeated, are sanctified or unhallowed according to the principle, which dictates them; and will be accepted or rejected accordingly. This principle kept in due exercise, becomes a habit, and every act strengthens the inclination, adding vigour to the principle and pleasure to the performance.

We cannot be said to be real Christians, till religion become our animating motive, our predominating principle and pursuit, as much as worldly things are the predominating motive, principle and pursuit, of worldly men.

New converts, it is said, are most zealous, but they are not always the most persevering. If their tempers are warm; and they have only been touched on the side of their passions, they start eagerly, march rapidly, and are full of confidence in their own strength. They too often judge others with little charity, and themselves with little humility. While they accuse those who move steadily of standing still, they fancy their own course will never be slackened. If their conversion be not solid, religion, in losing its novelty, loses its power. Their speed declines. Nay, it will be happy if their motion become not retrograde. Those who are truly sincere, will commonly be persevering. If their speed is less eager, it is more steady. As they know their own heart more, they discover its deceitfulness, and learn to distrust themselves. As they become more humble in spirit, they become more charitable in judging. As they grow more firm in principle they grow more exact in conduct.

The rooted habits of a religious life may indeed lose their prominence because they are become more indented. If they are not embossed it is because they are burnt in. Where there is uniformity and consistency in the whole character, there will be little relief in an individual action. A good deed will be less striking in an established Christian than a deed less good in one who has been previously careless; good actions being his expected duty and his ordinary practice. Such a Christian indeed, when his right habits cease to be new and striking, may fear that he is declining: but his quiet and confirmed course is a surer evidence than the more early starts of charity, or fits of piety, which may have drawn more attention, and obtained more applause.

Again;—We should cultivate most assiduously, because the work is so difficult, those graces which are most opposite to our natural temper; the value of our good qualities depending much on their being produced by the victory over some natural wrong propensity. The implantation of a virtue is the eradication of a vice. It would cost one man more to keep down a rising passion than to do a brilliant deed. It will try another more to keep back a sparkling but corrupt thought, which his wit had suggested but which religion checks, than it would to give a large sum in charity. A real Christian being deeply sensible of the worthlessness of any actions which do not spring from the genuine fountain, will aim at such an habitual conformity to the divine image, that to perform all acts of justice, charity, kindness, temperance, and every kindred virtue, may become the temper, the habitual, the abiding state of his heart; that like natural streams they may flow spontaneously from the living source.

Practical Christianity then, is the actual operation of Christian principles. It is lying on the watch for occasions to exemplify them. It is 'exercising ourselves unto godliness.' A Christian cannot tell in the morning, what opportunities he may have of doing good during the day; but if he be a real Christian, he can tell that he will try to keep his heart open, his mind prepared, his affections alive to do whatever may occur in the way of duty. He will, as it were, stand in the way to receive the orders of Providence. Doing good is his vocation. Nor does the young artisan bind himself by firmer articles to the rigid performance of his master's work, than the indentured Christian to the active service of that Divine Master, who himself 'went about doing good.' He rejects no duty which comes within the sphere of his calling, nor does he think the work he is employed in a good one, if he might be doing a better. His having well acquitted himself of a good action, is so far from furnishing him with an excuse

for avoiding the next, that it is a new reason for his embarking in it. He looks not at the work which he has accomplished; but on that which he has to do. His views are always prospective. His charities are scarcely limited by his power. His will knows no limits. His fortune may have bounds: His benevolence has none. He is, in mind and desire, the benefactor of every miserable man. His heart is open to all the distressed; to the household of faith it overflows. Where the heart is large, however small the ability, a thousand ways of doing good will be invented. Christian charity is a great enlarger of means. Christian self-denial negatively accomplishes the purpose of the favourites of fortune in the fables of the nursery—if it cannot fill the purse by a wish, it will not empty it by a vanity. It provides for others by abridging from itself. Having carefully defined what is necessary and becoming, it allows of no encroachment on its definition. Superfluities it will lop, vanities it will cut off. The deviser of liberal things will find means of effecting them, which to the indolent appear incredible, to the covetous impossible. Christian beneficence takes a large sweep. That circumference cannot be small of which God is the centre. Nor does religious charity in a Christian stand still because not kept in motion by the main spring of the world. Money may fail, but benevolence will be going on. If he cannot relieve want, he may mitigate sorrow. He may warn the inexperienced, he may instruct the ignorant, he may confirm the doubting. The Christian will find out the cheapest way of *being* good as well as of *doing* good. If he cannot give money, he may exercise a more difficult virtue; he may forgive injuries. Forgiveness is the economy of the heart. A Christian will find it cheaper to pardon than to resent. Forgiveness saves expense of anger, the cost of hatred, the waste of spirits. It also puts the soul into a frame, which makes the practice of other virtues easy. The achievement of a hard duty is a great abolisher of difficulties. If great occasions do not arise, he will thankfully seize on small ones. If he cannot glorify God by serving others, he knows that he has always something to do at home; some evil temper to correct, some wrong propensity to reform, some crooked practice to straighten. He will never be at a loss for employment, while there is a sin or misery in the world; he will never be idle, while there is a distress to be relieved in another, or a corruption to be cured in his own heart. We have employment assigned to us for every circumstance in life. When we are alone, we have our thoughts to watch: in the family, our tempers; in company, our tongues.

What an example of disinterested goodness and unbounded kindness have we in our heavenly Father, who is merciful over all his works; who distributes common blessings without distinction; who bestows the necessary refreshments of life, the shining sun and the refreshing shower, without waiting, as we are apt to do for personal merit, or attachment or gratitude; who does not look out for desert, but want as a qualification for his favours; who does not afflict willingly, who delights in the happiness and desires the salvation of all his children; who dispenses his daily munificence and bears with our daily offences; who in return for our violation of his laws, supplies our necessities who waits patiently for our repentance, and even solicits us to have mercy on our own souls?

What a model for our humble imitation is that Divine person who was clothed with our humanity; who dwelt among us that the pattern being brought near might be rendered more engaging, the conformity be made more practicable; whose whole life was one unbroken series of universal charity; who in his complicated bounties never forgot that man is compounded both of soul and body; who after teaching the multitude, fed them; who repulsed none for being ignorant; was impatient with none for being dull; despised none for being contemned by the world; rejected none for being sinners; who encouraged those whose importunity others censured; who in healing sickness converted souls; who gave bread and forgave injuries!

It will be the endeavour of the sincere Christian, to illustrate his devotions in the morning by his actions during the day. He will try to make his conduct a practical exposition of the divine prayer which made a part of them. He will desire to hallow the name of God, to promote the enlargement and the 'coming' of the 'kingdom' of Christ. He will endeavour to do and to suffer his whole will; 'to forgive' as he himself trusts that he is forgiven. He will resolve to avoid that 'temptation' into which he had been praying 'not to be led;' and he will labour to shun the 'evil' from which he had been begging to be 'delivered.' He thus makes his prayers as practical as the other parts of his religion; and labours to render his conduct as spiritual as his prayers. The commentary and the text are of reciprocal application.

If this gracious Saviour has left us a perfect model for our devotion in his prayer, he has left a model no less perfect for our practice in his sermon. This Divine exposition has been sometimes misunderstood. It was not so much a supplement to a defective law, at the restoration of the purity of a perfect law from the corrupt interpretations of its blind expounders. These persons had ceased to consider it as forbidding the principle of sin, and as only forbidding the act. Christ restores it to its original meaning, spreads it out on its due extent, shows the largeness of its dimensions and the spirit of its institution. He unfolds all its motions, tendencies and relations. Not contenting himself, as human legislators, are obliged to do, to prohibit a man the act which is injurious to others, but the inward temper which is prejudicial to himself.

There cannot be a more striking instance, how emphatically every doctrine of the gospel has a reference to practical goodness, than is exhibited by St. Paul in that magnificent picture of the resurrection, in his epistle to the Corinthians, which our church has happily selected, for the consolation of survivors at the last closing scene of mortality. After an inference as triumphant as it is logical, that because 'Christ is risen, we shall rise also;' after the most philosophical illustration of the raising

of the body from the dust, by the process of grain sown in the earth, and by the springing up into a new mode of existence; after describing the subjugation of all things to the Redeemer, and his laying down the mediatorial kingdom; after sketching with a seraph's pencil, the relative glories of the celestial and terrestrial bodies; after exhausting the grandest images of created nature, and the dissolution of nature itself;—after such a display of the solemnities of the great day, as makes this world, and all its concerns shrink into nothing: in such a moment, when, if ever, the rapt spirit might be supposed too highly wrought for precept and admonition, the apostle, wound up as he was by the energies of inspiration, to the immediate view of the glorified state—the last trumpet sounding—the change from mortal to immortality effected in the twinkling of an eye —the sting of death drawn out—victory snatched from the grave—then, by a turn as surprising as it is beautiful, he draws a conclusion as unexpectedly practical as his premises were grand and awful: '*Therefore*, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable; always abounding in the work of the Lord.' Then at once, by another quick transition, resorting from the duty to the reward, and winding up the whole with an argument as powerful, as his rhetoric had been sublime, he adds—'Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'

CHAP. III.

Mistakes in Religion

To point out with precision all the mistakes which exist in the present day, on the awful subject of religion, would far exceed the limits of this small work. No mention therefore is intended to be made of the opinions or the practice of any particular body of people; nor will any notice be taken of any of the peculiarities of the numerous sects and parties which have risen up among us. It will be sufficient for the present purpose, to hazard some slight remarks on a few of those common classes of characters, which belong more or less to most general bodies.

There are, among many others, three different sorts of religious professors. The religion of one consists in a sturdy defence of what they themselves call orthodoxy, an attendance on public worship, and a general decency of behaviour. In their views of religion, they are not a little apprehensive of excess, not perceiving that their danger lies on the other side. They are far from rejecting faith or morals, but are somewhat afraid of *believing* too much, and a little scrupulous about *doing* too much, lest the former be suspected of fanaticism, and the latter of singularity. These Christians consider religion as a point, which they, by their regular observances, having attained, there is nothing further required but to maintain the point they have reached, by a repetition of the same observances. They are therefore satisfied to remain stationary, considering that whoever has obtained his end, is of course saved the labour of pursuit; he is to keep his ground without troubling himself in searching after imaginary perfection.

These frugal Christians are afraid of nothing so much as superfluity in their love, and supererogation in their obedience. This kind of fear however is always superfluous, but most especially in those who are troubled with the apprehension. They are apt to weigh in the nicely poised scales of scrupulous exactness, the duties which must of hard necessity be done, and those which without much risk may be left undone; compounding for a larger indulgence by the relinquishment of a smaller; giving up, through fear, a trivial gratification to which they are less inclined, and snatching doubtingly, as an equivalent, at one they like better. The gratification in both cases being perhaps such as a manly mind would hardly think worth contending for, even were religion out of the question. Nothing but love to God can conquer love of the world. One grain of that divine principle would make the scale of self-indulgence kick the beam.

These persons dread nothing so much as enthusiasm. Yet if to look for effects without their predisposing causes; to depend for heaven on that to which heaven was never promised, be features of enthusiasm, then are they themselves enthusiasts.

The religion of a second class, we have already described in the two preceding chapters. It consists in a heart devoted to its Maker; inwardly changed in its temper and disposition, yet deeply sensible of its remaining infirmities; continually aspiring however to higher improvements in faith, hope and charity, and thinking that 'the greatest of these is *charity*.' These, by the former class, are reckoned enthusiasts, but they are in fact, if Christianity be true, acting on the only rational principles. If the doctrines of the gospel have any solidity, if its promises have any meaning, these Christians are building on no false ground. They hope that submission to the power of God, obedience to his laws, compliance with his will, trust in his word, are through the efficacy of the eternal Spirit, real evidences, because they are vital acts of genuine faith in Jesus Christ. If they profess not to place their reliance on works, they are however more zealous in performing them than the others, who professing to depend on their good deeds for salvation, are not always diligent in securing it by the very means which they themselves establish to be alone effectual.

There is a third class—the high flown professor, who looks down from the giddy heights of antinomian delusion on the other two, abhors the one, and despises the other, concludes that the one is lost, and the other in a fair way to be so. Though perhaps not living himself in any course of immorality, which requires the sanction of such doctrines, he does not hesitate to imply in his discourse, that virtue is heathenish, and good works superfluous if not dangerous. He does not consider that though the Gospel is an act of oblivion to penitent sinners, yet it no where promises pardon to those who continue to live in a state of rebellion against God, and of disobedience to his laws. He forgets to insist to others that it is of little importance even

to believe that sin is an evil (which however they do not always believe) while they persist to live in it; that to know every thing of duty except the doing it, is to offend God with an aggravation from which ignorance itself is exempt. It is not giving ourselves up to Christ in a nameless, inexplicable way, which will avail us. God loves an humble, not an audacious faith. To suppose that the blood of Christ redeems us from sin, while sin continues to pollute the soul, is to suppose an impossibility; to maintain that it is effectual for the salvation, and not for the sanctification of the sinner, is to suppose that it acts like an amulet, an incantation, a talisman, which is to produce its effect by operating on the imagination, and not on the disease.

The religion which mixes with human passions, and is set on fire by them, will make a stronger blaze than that light which is from above, which sheds a steady and lasting brightness on the path, and communicates a sober but desirable warmth to the heart. It is equable and constant; while the other, like culinary fire, fed by gross materials, is extinguished the sooner from the fierceness of the flame.

That religion which is merely seated in the passions, is not only liable to wear itself out by its own impetuosity, but to be driven out by some other passion. The dominion of violent passions is short. They dispossess each other. When religion has had its day, it gives way to the next usurper. Its empire is no more solid than it is lasting, when principle and reason do not fix it on the throne.

The first of the above classes consider prudence as the paramount virtue in religion. Their antipodes, the flaming professors, believe a burning zeal to be the exclusive grace. *They* revere saint Paul's collocation of the three Christian graces, and think that the greatest of these is *faith*. Though even in respect of this grace, their conduct and conversation too often give us reason to lament that they do not bear in mind its genuine and distinctive properties. Their faith instead of working by love, seems to be adopted from a notion that it leaves the Christian nothing to do, rather than because it is its nature to lead him to do more and better than other men.

In this case, as in many others, that which is directly contrary to what is wrong, is wrong also. If each opponent would only barter half his favourite quality with the favourite quality of the other, both parties would approach nearer to the truth. They might even furnish a complete Christian between them, that is, provided the zeal of the one was sincere, and the prudence of the other honest. But the misfortune is, each is as proud of not possessing the quality he wants, because his adversary has it, as he is proud of possessing that of which the other is destitute, and *because* he is destitute of it.

Among the many mistakes in religion, it is commonly thought that there is something so unintelligible, absurd, and fanatical in the term conversion, that those who employ it, run no small hazard of being involved in the ridicule it excites. It is seldom used but ludicrously, or in contempt. This arises partly from the levity and ignorance of the censurer, but perhaps as much from the imprudence and enthusiasm of those, who have absurdly confined it to real or supposed instances of sudden or miraculous changes from profligacy to piety. But surely, with reasonable people, we run no risk in asserting that he, who being awakened by any of those various methods which the Almighty uses to bring his creatures to the knowledge of himself; who seeing the corruptions that are in the world, and feeling those with which his heart abounds, is brought, whether gradually or rapidly from an evil heart of unbelief, to a lively faith in the Redeemer; from a life, not only of gross vice, but of worldliness and vanity, to a life of progressive piety; whose humility keeps pace with his progress; who, though his attainments are advancing, is so far from counting himself to have attained, that he presses onward with unabated zeal, and evinces, by the change in his conduct, the change that has taken place in his heart—such a one is surely as sincerely converted, and the effect is as much produced by the same divine energy, as if some instantaneous revolution in his character had given it a miraculous appearance. The doctrines of Scripture are the same now as when David called them, law *converting* the soul, and giving *light* to the eyes.' This is perhaps the most accurate and comprehensive definition of the change for which we are contending, for it includes both the illumination of the understanding, and the alteration in the disposition.

If then this obnoxious expression signify nothing more nor less than that change of character which consists in turning from the world to God, however the *term* may offend, there is nothing ridiculous in the *thing*. Now, as it is not for the term which we contend, but for the principle conveyed by it; so it is the principle and not the term which is the real ground of objection; though it is a little inconsistent that many who would sneer at the idea of conversion, would yet take it extremely ill if it were suspected that their hearts were not turned to God.

Reformation, a term against which no objection is ever made, would, if words continued to retain their primitive signification, convey the same idea. For it is plain that to *reform* means to make anew. In the present use, however, it does not convey the same meaning in the same extent, nor indeed does it imply the operation of the same principle. Many are reformed on human motives, many are partially reformed; but only those who, as our great poet says, are reformed altogether,' are converted. There is no complete reformation in the conduct effected without a revolution in the heart. Ceasing from some sins; retaining others in a less degree; or adopting such as are merely creditable; or flying from one sin to another; or ceasing from the external act without any internal change of disposition, is not Christian reformation. The new principle must abolish the old habit; the rooted inclination must be subdued by the substitution of an opposite one. The natural bias must be changed. The actual offence will no more be pardoned than cured, if the inward corruption be not eradicated. To be 'alive unto God through Jesus Christ' must follow 'the death unto sin.' There cannot be new aims and

ends where there is not a new principle to produce them. We shall not choose a new path until a light from heaven direct our choice and 'guide our feet.' We shall not 'run the way of God's commandments,' till God himself enlarge our heart.

We do not, however, insist that the change required is such as precludes the possibility of falling into sin; but it is a change which fixes in the soul such a disposition as shall make sin a burden, as shall make the desire of pleasing God the governing desire of a man's heart; as shall make him hate the evil which he does; as shall make the lowness of his attainments the subject of his deepest sorrow. A Christian has hopes and fears, cares and temptations, inclinations and desires, as well as other men. God in changing the heart does not extinguish the passions. Were that the case the Christian life would cease to be a warfare.

We are often deceived by that partial improvement which appears in the victory over some one bad quality. But we must not mistake the removal of a symptom for a radical cure of the disease. An occasional remedy might remove an accidental sickness, but it requires a general regimen to renovate the diseased constitution.

It is the natural but melancholy history of the unchanged heart, that from youth to advanced years, there is no other revolution in the character but such as increase both the number and quality of its defects: that the levity, vanity, and self-sufficiency of the young man is carried into advanced life, and only meet, and mix with the defects of a mature period: that, instead of crying out with the royal prophet, 'O remember not my old sins,' he is inflaming his reckoning by new ones: that age, protracting all the faults of youth, furnishes its own contingent of vices: that sloth, suspicion, and covetousness, swell the account which religion has not been called in to cancel: that the world, though it has lost the power to delight, has yet lost nothing of its power to enslave. Instead of improving in candour by the inward sense of its own defects, that very consciousness makes him less tolerant of the defects of others, and more suspicious of their apparent virtues. His charity in a warmer season having failed to bring him in that return of gratitude for which it was partly performed, and having never flowed from the genuine spring, is dried up. His friendships having been formed on worldly principles, or interest, or ambition, or convivial hilarity, fail him. One must make some sacrifices to the world, is the prevailing language of the nominal Christian. 'What will the world pay you for your sacrifices?' replies the real Christian. Though he finds that the world is insolvent, that it pays nothing of what is promised, for it cannot bestow what it does not possess—happiness: yet he continues to cling to it almost as confidently as if it had never disappointed him. Were we called upon to name the object under the sun which excites the deepest commiseration in the heart of Christian sensibility, which includes in itself the most affecting congruities, which contains the sum and substance of real human misery, we should not hesitate to say *an irreligious old age.* The mere debility of declining years, even the hopelessness of decrepitude, in the pious, though they excite sympathy, yet it is the sympathy of tenderness unmixed with distress. We take and give comfort, from the cheering persuasion that the exhausted body will soon cease to clog its immortal companion; that the dim and failing eyes will soon open on a world of glory. Dare we paint the reverse of the picture? Dare we suffer the imagination to dwell on the opening prospects of hoary impiety? Dare we figure to ourselves that the weakness, the miseries, the terrors, we are now commiserating, are ease, are peace, are happiness compared with the unutterable perspective?

There is a fatal way of lulling the conscience by entertaining diminishing thoughts of sins long since committed. We persuade ourselves to forget them, and we therefore persuade ourselves that they are not remembered by God. But though distance diminishes objects to the eye of the beholder, it does not actually lessen them. Their real magnitude remains the same. Deliver us, merciful God! from the delusion of believing that secret sins, of which the world has no cognizance, early sins, which the world has forgotten, but which are known to 'Him with whom we have to do,' become by secrecy and distance as if they had never been. 'Are not these things noted in THY book?' Perhaps if we remember them, God may forget them, especially if our remembrance be such as to induce a sound repentance. If we remember them not, He assuredly will. The holy contrition which should accompany this remembrance, while it will not abate our humble trust in our compassionate Redeemer, will keep our conscience tender, and our heart watchful.

We do not deny that there is frequently much kindness and urbanity, much benevolence and generosity, in men who do not even pretend to be religious. These qualities often flow from constitutional feeling, natural softness of temper, and warm affections: often from an elegant education, that best *human* sweetener, and polisher of social life. We feel a tender regret as we exclaim 'what a fine soil would such dispositions afford to plant religion in?' Well bred persons are accustomed to respect all the decorums of society, to connect inseparably the ideas of personal comfort with public esteem, of generosity with credit, of order with respectability. They have a keen sense of dishonour, and are careful to avoid every thing that may bring the shadow of discredit on their name. Public opinion is the breath by which they live, the standard by which they act; of course they would not lower by gross misconduct, that standard on which their happiness depends. They have been taught to respect themselves; this they can do with more security while they can retain, on this half-way principle the respect of others.

In some who make further advances towards religion, we continue to see it in that same low degree which we have always observed. It is dwarfish and stunted, it makes no shoots. Though it gives some signs of life, it does not grow. By a tame and spiritless round, or rather by this fixed and immoveable position, we rob ourselves of that fair reward of peace and joy

which attends on an humble consciousness of progress: on the feeling of difficulties conquered; on a sense of the divine favour. That religion which is profitable, is commonly perceptible. Nothing supports a traveller in his Christian course like the conviction that he is getting on; like looking back on the country he has passed; and, above all, like the sense of that protection which has hitherto carried him on, and of that grace which has promised to support him to the end.

The proper motion of the renewed heart is still directed upward. True religion is of an aspiring nature, continually tending towards that heaven from whence it was transplanted. Its top is high because its root is deep. It is watered by a perennial fountain; in its most flourishing state it is always capable of further growth. Real goodness proves itself to be such by a continual desire to be better. No virtue on earth is ever in a complete state. Whatever stage of religion any man has attained, if he be satisfied to rest in that stage, we would not call that man religious. The Gospel seems to consider the highest degree of goodness as the lowest with which a Christian ought to sit down satisfied. We cannot be said to be finished in any Christian grace, because there is not one which may not be carried further than we have carried it. This promotes the double purpose of keeping us humble as to our present stage, and of stimulating us to something higher which we may hope to attain.

That superficial thing, which by mere people of the world is dignified by the appellation of religion, though it brings just that degree of credit which makes part of the system of worldly Christians; neither brings comfort for this world, nor security for the next. Outward observances, indispensable as they are, are not religion. They are the accessory, but not the principal; they are important aids and adjuncts, but not the thing itself; they are its aliment but not its life, the fuel but not the flame, the scaffolding but not the edifice. Religion can no more subsist merely by them. They are divinely appointed, and must be conscientiously observed; but observed as a means to promote an end, and not as an end in themselves.

The heartless homage of formal worship, where the living power does not give life to the form, the cold compliment of ceremonial attendance, without the animating principle, as it will not bring peace to our own mind, so neither will it satisfy a jealous God. That God whose eye is on the heart, 'who trieth the reins and searcheth the spirits,' will not be satisfied that we make him little more than a nominal deity, while the world is the real object of our worship. Such persons seem to have almost the whole body of performance; all they want is the soul. They are constant in their devotions, but the heart, which even the heathens esteemed the best part of the sacrifice, they keep away. They read the Scriptures, but rest in the letter, instead of trying themselves by its spirit.—They consider it as an enjoined task, but not as the quick and powerful instrument put into their hands for the critical dissection of 'piercing and dividing asunder the soul and spirit;' not as the penetrating 'discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' These well-intentioned persons seem to spend no inconsiderable portion of time in religious exercises, and yet complain that they make little progress. They almost seem to insinuate as if the Almighty did not keep his word with them, and manifest that religion to them is not 'pleasantness,' nor her 'paths peace.'

Of such may we not ask, would you not do better to examine than to complain? to inquire whether you do, indeed, possess a heart which notwithstanding its imperfections, is sincerely devoted to God? He who does not desire to be perfect, is not sincere. Would you not do well to convince yourselves that God is not unfaithful? that his promises do not fail? that his goodness is not slackened? May you not be entertaining some secret infidelity, practising some latent disobedience, withholding some part of your heart, neglecting to exercise that faith, subtracting something from that devotedness, to which a Christian should engage himself, and to which the promises of God are annexed? Do you indulge no propensities contrary to his will? Do you never resist the dictates of his Spirit? never shut your eyes to its illumination, nor your heart to its influences? Do you not indulge some cherished sin which obscures the light of grace, some practice which obstructs the growth of virtue, some distrust which chills the warmth of love? The discovery will repay the search, and if you succeed in this scrutiny, let not the detection discourage but stimulate.

If, then, you resolve to take up religion in earnest, especially if you have actually adopted its customary forms, rest not in such low attainment as will afford neither present peace nor future happiness. To know Christianity only in its external forms, and its internal dissatisfaction, its superficial appearances without, and its disquieting apprehensions within; to be desirous of standing well with the world as a Christian, yet to be unsupported by a well-founded Christian hope; to depend for happiness on the opinion of men, instead of the favour of God; to go on dragging through the mere exercises of piety, without deriving from them real strength or solid peace; to live in the dread of being called an enthusiast, by outwardly exceeding in religion, and in secret consciousness of falling short of it; to be conformed to the world's view of Christianity, rather than to aspire to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, is a state, not of pleasure but of penalty, not of conquest but of hopeless conflict, not of ingenuous love but of tormenting fear. It is knowing religion only as the captive in a foreign land knows the country in which he is a prisoner. He hears from the cheerful natives of its beauties, but is himself ignorant of every thing beyond his own gloomy limits. He hears of others as free and happy, yet feels nothing himself but the rigours of incarceration.

The Christian character is little understood by the votaries of the world; if it were, they would be struck with its grandeur. It is the very reverse of that meanness and pusillanimity, that abject spirit and those narrow views, which those who know it not ascribe to it.

A Christian lives at the height of his being;

not only at the top of his spiritual, but of his intellectual life. He alone lives in the full exercise of his rational powers. Religion ennobles his reason while it enlarges it.

Let then your soul act up to its high destination; let not that which was made to soar to heaven, grovel in the dust. Let it not live so much below itself. You wonder it is not more fixed, when it is perpetually resting on things which are not fixed themselves. In the rest of a Christian there is stability, Nothing can shake his confidence but sin. Outward attack and troubles rather fix than unsettle him, as tempests from without only serve to root the oak faster, while an inward canker will gradually rot and decay it.

These are only a few of the mistakes among the multitude which might have been pointed out; but these are noticed as being of common and every day occurrence. The ineffectiveness of such a religion will be obvious.

That religion which sinks Christianity into a mere conformity to religious usages, must always fail of substantial effects. If sin be seated in the heart, if that be its home, that is the place in which it must be combatted. It is in vain to attack it in the suburbs, when it is lodged in the centre. Mere forms can never expel that enemy which they can never reach. By a religion of decencies, our corruptions may perhaps be driven out of sight, but they will never be driven out of possession. If they are expelled from their outworks, they will retreat to their citadel. If they do not appear in grosser forms, prohibited by the decalogue, still they will exist. The shape may be altered, but the principle will remain. They will exist in the spiritual modification of the same sins, equally forbidden by the divine expositor. He who dares not be revengeful, will be unforgiving. He who ventures not to break the letter of the seventh commandment in act, will violate it in the spirit. He who has not courage to forfeit heaven by profligacy, will scale it by pride, or forfeit it by unprofitableness.

It is not any vain hope, built on some external privilege or performance on the one hand, nor a presumptuous confidence that our names are written in the book of life, on the other, which can afford a reasonable ground of safety, but it is endeavouring to keep all the commandments of God; it is living to him who died for us; it is being conformed to his image, as well as redeemed by his blood. This is Christian virtue; this is the holiness of a believer. A lower motive will produce a lower morality, but such an unsanctified morality God will not accept.

For it will little avail us that Christ has died for us, that he has conquered sin, triumphed over the powers of darkness, and overcome the world, while any sin retains its unresisted dominion in our hearts, while the world is our idol, while our fostered corruptions cause us to prefer darkness to light. We must not persuade ourselves that we are reconciled to God while our rebellious hearts are not reconciled to goodness.

It is not casting a set of opinions into a mould, and a set of duties into a system, which constitutes the Christian religion. The circumference must have a centre, the body must have a soul, the performances must have a principle. Outward observances were wisely constituted to rouse our forgetfulness, to awaken our secular spirits, to call back our negligent hearts; but it was never intended that we should stop short in the use of them. They were designed to excite holy thoughts, to quicken us to holy deeds, but not to be used as equivalents for either. But we find it cheaper to serve God in a multitude of exterior acts, than to starve on interior corruption.

Nothing short of that uniform stable principle, that fixedness in religion which directs a man in all his actions, aims, and pursuits, to God as his ultimate end, can give consistency to his conduct or tranquillity to his soul. This state once attained, he will not waste all his thoughts and designs upon the world; he will not lavish all his affections on so poor a thing as his own advancement. He will desire to devote all to the only object worthy of them, to God. Our Saviour has taken care to provide that our ideas of glorifying him may not run out into fanciful chimeras or subtle inventions, by simply stating—'HEREIN IS MY FATHER GLORIFIED, THAT YE BEAR MUCH FRUIT.' This, he goes on to inform us, is the true evidence of our being of the number of his people, by adding—'so shall ye be my disciples.'

CHAP. IV.

Periodical Religion.

We deceive ourselves not a little when we fancy that what is emphatically called *the world*, is only to be found in this or that situation. The world is every where. It is a nature as well as a place; a principle as well as a 'local habitation and a name.' Though the principle and the nature flourish most in those haunts which are their congenial soil, yet we are too ready, when we withdraw from the world abroad, to bring it home, to lodge it in our own bosom. The natural heart is both its temple and its worshipper.

But the most devoted idolater of the world, with all the capacity and industry which he may have applied to the subject, has never yet been able to accomplish the grand design of uniting the interests of heaven and earth. This experiment, which has been more assiduously and more frequently tried than that of the philosopher for the grand hermetic secret, has been tried with about the same degree of success. The most laborious process of the spiritual chemist to reconcile religion with the world, has never yet been competent to make the contending principles coalesce.

But to drop metaphor.—Religion was never yet thoroughly relinquished by a heart full of the world. The world in return cannot be completely enjoyed where there is just religion enough to disturb its false peace. In such minds heaven and earth ruin each other's enjoyments.

There is a religion which is too sincere for hypocrisy, but too transient to be profitable; too

superficial to reach the heart, too unproductive to proceed from it. It is slight, but not false. It has discernment enough to distinguish sin, but not firmness enough to oppose it; compunction sufficient to soften the heart, but not vigour sufficient to reform it. It laments when it does wrong, and performs all the functions of repentance of sin except forsaking it. It has every thing of devotion except the stability, and gives every thing to religion except the heart. This is a religion of times, events, and circumstances; it is brought into play by accidents, and dwindles away with the occasion which called it out. Festivals and fasts which occur but seldom, are much observed, and it is to be feared *because* they occur but seldom; while the great festival which comes every week, comes too often to be so respectfully treated. The piety of these people comes out much in sickness, but is apt to retreat again as recovery approaches. If they die, they are placed by their admirers in the Saints' calender; if they recover, they go back into the world they had renounced, and again suspend their amendment as often as Death suspends his blow.

There is another class whose views are still lower, who cannot so far shake off religion as to be easy without retaining its brief and stated forms, and who contrive to mix up these forms with a faith of a piece with their practice. They blend their inconsistent works with a vague and unwarranted reliance on what the Saviour has done for them, and thus patch up a merit, and a propitiation of their own—running the hazard of incurring the danger of punishment by their lives, and inventing a scheme to avert it by their creed. Religion never interferes with their pleasures except by the compliment of a short and occasional suspension. Having got through these periodical acts of devotion, they return to the same scenes of vanity and idleness which they had quitted for the temporary duty: forgetting that it was the very end of those acts of devotion to cure the vanity and to correct the idleness. Had the periodical observance answered its true design, it would have disinclined them to the pleasure instead of giving them a disposition for its indulgence. Had they used the devout exercise in a right spirit, and improved it to the true end, it would have set the heart and life at work on all those pursuits which it was calculated to promote. But their project has more ingenuity. By the stated minutes they give to religion, they cheaply purchase a protection for the misemployment of the rest of their time. They make these periodical devotions a kind of spiritual insurance office, which is to make up to the adventurers in pleasure, any loss or damage which they may sustain in its voyage.

It is of these shallow devotions, these presumed equivalents for a new heart and a new life, that God declares by the prophet, that he is 'weary.' Though of his own express appointment, they become 'an abomination' to him as soon as the sign comes to be rested in for the thing signified. We Christians have our 'new moons and our sacrifices' under other names and other shapes; of which sacrifices, that is, of the spirit in which they are offered, the Almighty has said, 'I cannot away with them, they are iniquity.'

Now is this superficial devotion that 'giving up ourselves not with our lips only, but with our lives,' to our Maker, to which we solemnly pledge ourselves, at least once a week? Is consecrating an hour or two to public worship on the Sunday morning, making the Sabbath 'a delight?' Is desecrating the rest of the day, by 'doing our own ways, finding our own pleasure, speaking our own words,' making it 'honourable?'

Sometimes in an awakening sermon, these periodical religionists hear, with awe and terror, of the hour of death and the day of judgment. Their hearts are penetrated with the solemn sounds. They confess the awful realities by the impression they make on their own feelings. The sermon ends, and with it the serious reflections it excited. While they listen to these things especially if the preacher be alarming, they are all in all to them. They return to the world—and these things are as if they were not; as if they had never been; as if their reality lasted only while they were preached; as if their existence depended only on their being heard; as if truth were no longer truth than while it solicited their notice; as if there were as little stability in religion itself as in their attention to it. As soon as their minds are disengaged from the question, one would think that death and judgment were an invention, that heaven and hell were blotted from existence, that eternity ceased to be eternity, in the long intervals in which they cease to be the object of their consideration.

This is the natural effect of what we venture to denominate *periodical religion*. It is a transient homage kept totally distinct and separate from the rest of our lives, instead of its being made the prelude and the principle of a course of pious practice; instead of our weaving our devotions and our actions into one uniform tissue by doing all in one spirit and to one end. When worshippers of this description pray for 'a clean heart and a right spirit;' when they beg of God to 'turn away their eyes from beholding vanity,' is it not to be feared that they pray to be made what they resolve never to become, that they would be very unwilling to become as good, as they pray to be made, and would be sorry to be as penitent as they profess to desire? But alas! they are in little danger of being taken at their word; there is too much reason to fear their petitions will not be heard or answered, for prayer for the pardon of sin will obtain no pardon, while we retain the sin in hope that the prayer will be accepted without the renunciation.

The most solemn office of our Religion, the sacred memorial of the death of its Author, the blessed injunction and tender testimony of his dying love, the consolation of the humble believer, the gracious appoinment for strengthening his faith, quickening his repentance, awakening his gratitude and kindling his charity, is too often resorted to on the same erroneous principle. He who ventures to live without the use of this holy institution, lives in a state of disobedience to the last appointment of his Redeemer. He who rests in it as a means for sup-

plying the place of habitual piety, totally mistakes its design, and is fatally deceiving his own soul.

This awful solemnity is, it is to be hoped, rarely frequented even by this class of Christians without a desire of approaching it with the pious feelings above described. But if they carry them to the altar, are they equally anxious to carry them away from it; are they anxious to maintain them after it? Does the rite so seriously approached commonly leave any vestige of seriousness behind it? Are they careful to perpetuate the feelings they were so desirous to excite? Do they strive to make them produce solid and substantial effects? Would that this inconstancy of mind were to be found only in the class of characters under consideration! Let the reader, however sincere in his desires, let the writer, however ready to lament the levity of others, seriously ask their own hearts if they can entirely acquit themselves of the inconsistency they are so forward to blame. If they do not find the charge brought against others but too applicable to themselves.

Irreverence antecedent to, or during this sacred solemnity, is far more rare than durable improvement after it. If there are, as we are willing to believe, none so profane as to violate the act, except those who impiously use it only as 'a pick-lock to a place,' there are too few who make it lastingly beneficial. Few so thoughtless as not to approach it with resolution of amendment; few comparatively who carry those resolutions into effect. Fear operates in the previous instance. Why should not love operate in that which is subsequent?

A periodical religion is accompanied with a periodical repentance. This species of repentance is adopted with no small mental reservation. It is partial and disconnected. These fragments of contrition, these broken parcels of penitence—while a succession of worldly pursuits is not only resorted to, but is intended to be resorted to, during the whole of the intervening spaces, is not that sorrow which the Almighty hath promised to accept. To render it pleasing to God and efficacious to ourselves, there must be an agreement in the parts, an entireness in the whole web of life. There must be an integral repentance. A quarterly contrition in the four weeks preceding the sacred seasons will not wipe out the daily offences, the hourly negligences of the whole sinful year. Sins half forsaken through fear, and half retained through partially resisted temptation and partially adopted resolution, make up but an unprofitable piety.

In the bosom of these professors there is a perpetual conflict between fear and inclination. In conversation you will generally find them very warm in the cause of religion; but it is religion as opposed to infidelify, not as opposed to worldly-mindedness. They defend the worship of God, but desire to be excused from his service. Their heart is the slave of the world, but their blindness hides from them the turpitude of that world. They commend piety but dread its requisitions. They allow that repentance is necessary, but then how easy is it to find reasons for deferring a necessary evil? *Who* will hastily adopt a painful measure which he can find a creditable pretence for evading? They censure whatever is ostensibly wrong, but avoiding only part of it, the part they retain robs them of the benefits of their partial renunciation.

We cannot sufficiently admire the wisdom of the church, in enjoining extraordinary acts of devotion at the return of those festivals so happily calculated to excite devotional feelings. Extraordinary repentance of sin is peculiarly suitable to the seasons that record those grand events which sin occasioned. But the church never intended that these more stated and strict self-examinations should preclude our habitual self-inspection. It never intended its holy offices to supply the place of general holiness, but to promote it. It intended that these solemn occasions should animate the flame of piety, but it never meant to furnish a reason for neglecting to keep the flame alive till the next return should again kindle the dying embers. It meant that every such season should gladden the heart of the Christian at its approach, and not discharge him from duty at its departure. It meant to lighten his conscience of the burden of sin, not to encourage him to begin a new score, again to be wiped off at the succeeding festival. It intended to quicken the vigilance of the believer and not to dismiss the sentinel from his post. If we are not the better for these divinely appointed helps, we are the worse If we use them as a discharge from that diligence which they were intended to promote, we convert our blessings into snares.

This abuse of our advantages arises from our not incorporating our devotions into the general habit of our lives. Till our religion become an inward principle, and not an external act, we shall not receive that benefit from her forms, however excellent, which they are calculated to convey. It is to those who possess the spirit of Christianity that her forms are so valuable. To them, the form excites the spirit, as the spirit animates the form. Till religion become the desire of our hearts, it will not become the business of our lives. We are far from meaning that it is to be its actual occupation; but that every portion, every habit, every act of life is to be animated by its spirit, influenced by its principle, governed by its power.

The very mark of our nature and our necessary commerce with the world, naturally fill our hearts and minds with thoughts and ideas, over which we have unhappily too little control. We find this to be the case when in our better hours we attempt to give ourselves up to serious reflection. How many intrusions of worldly thoughts, how many impertinent imaginations, not only irrelevant, but uncalled and unwelcome, crowd in upon the mind so forcibly as scarcely to be repelled by our sincerest efforts. How impotent then to repel such images must that mind be, which is devoted to worldly pursuits, which yields itself up to them, whose opinions, habits, and conduct are under their allowed influence!

If, as we have before observed, religion consists in a new heart and a new spirit, it will become not our occasional act, but our abiding disposition, proving its settled existence in the

mind by its habitually disposing our thoughts and actions, our devotions and our practice to a conformity to each other and to itself.

Let us not consider a spirit of worldliness as a little infirmity, as a natural, and therefore a pardonable weakness; as a trifling error which will be overlooked for the sake of our many good qualities. It is in fact the essence of our other faults; the temper that stands between us and our salvation; the spirit which is in direct opposition to the Spirit of God. Individual sins may more easily be cured, but this is the principle of all spiritual disease. A worldly spirit where it is rooted and cherished, runs through the whole character, insinuates itself in all we say and think and do. It is this which makes us so dead in religion, so averse from spiritual things, so forgetful of God, so unmindful of eternity, so satisfied with ourselves, so impatient of serious discourse, and so alive to that vain and frivolous intercourse, which excludes intellect almost as much as piety from our general conversation.

It is not therefore our more considerable actions alone which require watching, for they seldom occur. They do not form the habit of life in ourselves, nor the chief importance of our example to others. It is to our ordinary behaviour; it is to our deportment in common life; it is to our prevailing turn of mind in general intercourse, by which we shall profit or corrupt those with whom we associate. It is our conduct in social life which will help to diffuse a spirit of piety, or a distaste to it. If we have much influence, this is the place in which particularly to exert it. If we have little we have still enough to infect the temper and lower the tone of our narrow society.

If we really believe that it is the design of Christianity to raise us to a participation of the divine nature, the slightest reflection on this elevation of our character would lead us to maintain its dignity in the ordinary intercourse of life. We should not so much inquire whether we are transgressing any actual prohibition; whether any standing law is pointed against us; as whether we are supporting the dignity of the Christian character; whether we are acting suitably to our profession; whether more exactness in the common occurrences of the day, more correctness in our conversation, would not be such evidences of our religion, as by being obvious and intelligible, might not almost insensibly produce important effects.

The most insignificant people must not through indolence and selfishness undervalue their own influence. Most persons have a little circle of which they are a sort of centre. Its smallness may lessen their quantity of good, but does not diminish the duty of using that little influence wisely. Where is the human being so inconsiderable but that he may in some shape benefit others, either by calling their virtues into exercise, or by setting them an example of virtue himself? But we are humble just in the wrong place. When the exhibition of our talents or splendid qualities is in question, we are not backward in the display. When a little self-denial is to be exercised, when a little good might be effected by our example, by our discreet management in company, by giving a better turn to conversation, then at once we grow wickedly modest—'Such an insignificant creature as I am can do no good.'—'Had I higher rank or brighter talents, then indeed my influence might be exerted to some purpose.'—Thus under the mask of diffidence, we justify our indolence; and let slip those lesser occasions of promoting religion which if we all improved, how much might the condition of society be raised.

The hackneyed interrogation, 'What—must we be always talking about religion?' must have the hackneyed answer—Far from it. Talking about religion is not being religious. But we may bring the *spirit* of religion into company, and keep it in perpetual operation when we do not professedly make it our subject. We may be constantly advancing its interests, we may without effort or affectation be giving an example of candour, of moderation, of humility, of forbearance. We may employ our influence by correcting falsehood, by checking levity, by discouraging calumny, by vindicating misrepresented merit, by countenancing every thing which has a good tendency—in short, by throwing our whole weight, be it great or small, into the right scale.

CHAP. V.

Prayer.

PRAYER is the application of want to him who only can relieve it; the voice of sin to him who alone can pardon it. It is the urgency of poverty, the prostration of humility, the fervency of penitence, the confidence of trust. It is not eloquence, but earnestness: not the definition of helplessness, but the feeling of it; not figures of speech, but compunction of soul. It is the 'Lord save us or we perish' of drowning Peter; the cry of faith to the ear of mercy.

Adoration is the noblest employment of created beings; confession the natural language of guilty creatures; gratitude the spontaneous expression of pardoned sinners.

Prayer is desire. It is not a conception of the mind nor a mere effort of the intellect, nor an act of the memory; but an elevation of the soul towards its Maker; a pressing sense of our own ignorance and infirmity, a consciousness of the perfections of God, of his readiness to hear, of his power to help, of his willingness to save.

It is not an emotion produced in the senses; nor an effect wrought by the imagination; but a determination of the will, an effusion of the heart.

Prayer is the guide to self-knowledge by prompting us to look after our sins in order to pray against them; a motive to vigilance, by teaching us to guard against those sins which, through self-examination, we have been enabled to detect.

Prayer is an act both of the understanding and of the heart. The understanding must apply itself to the knowledge of the divine perfections, or the heart will not be led to the adoration of them. It would not be a *reasonable*

service if the mind was excluded. It must be rational worship, or the human worshipper would not bring to the service the distinguished faculty of his nature, which is reason. It must be spiritual worship; or it would want the distinctive quality to make it acceptable to Him, who has declared that He will be worshipped 'in spirit and in truth.'

Prayer is right in itself as the most powerful means of resisting sin and advancing in holiness. It is above all right, as every thing is, which has the authority of Scripture, the command of God, and the example of Christ.

There is a perfect consistency in all the ordinations of God; a perfect congruity in the whole scheme of his dispensations. If man were not a corrupt creature, such prayer as the gospel enjoins would not have been necessary. Had not prayer been an important means for curing those corruptions, a God of perfect wisdom would not have ordered it. He would not have prohibited every thing which tends to inflame and promote them, had they not existed, nor would he have commanded every thing that has a tendency to diminish and remove them, had not their existence been fatal. Prayer, therefore, is an indispensable part of his economy and of our obedience.

It is a hackneyed objection to the use of prayer that it is offending the omniscience of God to suppose he requires information of our wants. But no objection can be more futile. We do not pray to inform God of our wants, but to express our sense of the wants which he already knows. As he has not so much made his promise to our necessities, as to our requests, it is reasonable that our requests should be made before we can hope that our necessities will be relieved. God does not promise to those who want that they shall 'have,' but to those who 'ask;' not to those who need that they shall 'find,' but to those who 'seek.' So far therefore from his previous knowledge of our wants being a ground of objection to prayer, it is in fact the true ground for our application. Were he not knowledge itself, our information would be of as little use as our application would be, were he not goodness itself.

We cannot attain to a just notion of prayer while we remain ignorant of our own nature, of the nature of God as revealed in Scripture, of our relation to him and dependence on him. If therefore we do not live in the daily study of the holy scriptures, we shall want the highest motives to this duty and the best helps for performing it; if we do, the cogency of these motives, and the inestimable value of these helps, will render argument unnecessary and exhortation superfluous.

One cause therefore of the dulness of many Christians in prayer, is, their slight acquaintance with the sacred volume. They hear it periodically, they read it occasionally, they are contented to know it historically, to consider it superficially, but they do not endeavour to get their minds imbued with its spirit. If they store their memory with its facts, they do not impress their hearts with its truths. They do not regard it as the nutriment on which their spiritual life and growth depend. They do not pray over it; they do not consider all its doctrines as of practical application; they do not cultivate that spiritual discernment which alone can enable them judiciously to appropriate its promises and its denunciations to their own actual case. They do not apply it as an unerring line to ascertain their own rectitude or obliquity.

In our retirements, we too often fritter away our precious moments, moments rescued from the world, in trivial, sometimes it is to be feared, in corrupt thoughts. But if we must give the reins to our imagination, let us send this excursive faculty to range among great and noble objects. Let it stretch forward under the sanction of faith and the anticipation of prophecy, to the accomplishment of those glorious promises and tremendous threatenings which will soon be realized in the eternal world. These are topics which under the safe and sober guidance of Scripture, will fix its largest speculations and sustain its loftiest flights. The same Scripture while it expands and elevates the mind, will keep it subject to the dominion of truth; while at the same time it will teach it that its boldest excursions must fall infinitely short of the astonishing realities of a future state.

Though we cannot pray with a too deep sense of sin, we may make our sins too exclusively the object of our prayers. While we keep, with a self-abasing eye, our own corruptions in view, let us look with equal intenseness on that mercy, which cleanseth from all sin. Let our prayers be all humiliation, but let them not be all complaint.—When men indulge no other thought but that they are rebels, the hopelessness of pardon hardens them into disloyalty. Let them look to the mercy of the king, as well as to the rebellion of the subject. If we contemplate his grace as displayed in the gospel, then, though our humility will increase, our despair will vanish. Gratitude in this as in human instances will create affection. 'We love him because he first loved us.'

Let us then always keep our unworthiness in view as a reason why we stand in need of the mercy of God in Christ; but never plead it as a reason why we should not draw nigh to him to implore that mercy. The best men are unworthy for their own sakes; the worst on repentance will be accepted for his sake and through his merits.

In prayer then, the perfections of God, and especially his mercy in our redemption, should occupy our thoughts as much as our sins; our obligation to him as much as our departures from him. We should keep up in our hearts a constant sense of our own weakness, not with a design to discourage the mind and depress the spirits; but with a view to drive us out of ourselves, in search of the divine assistance. We should contemplate our infirmity in order to draw us to look for his strength, and to seek that power from God which we vainly look for in ourselves. We do not tell a sick friend of his danger in order to grieve or terrify him, but to induce him to apply to his physician, and to have recourse to his remedy.

Among the charges which have been brough against serious piety, one is, that it teaches men

to despair. The charge is just in one sense as to the fact, but false in the sense intended. It teaches us to despair indeed of ourselves, while it inculcates that faith in a Redeemer, which is the true antidote to despair. Faith quickens the doubting spirit, while it humbles the presumptuous. The lowly Christian takes comfort in the blessed promise, that God will never forsake them that are his. The presumptuous man is equally right in the doctrine, but wrong in applying it. He takes that comfort to himself which was meant for another class of characters. The mal-appropriation of Scripture promises and threatenings, is the cause of much error and delusion.

Though some devout enthusiasts have fallen into error by an unnatural and impracticable disinterestedness, asserting that God is to be loved exclusively for himself, with an absolute renunciation of any view of advantage to ourselves; yet that prayer cannot be mercenary, which involves God's glory with our own happiness, and makes his will the law of our requests. Though we are to desire the glory of God supremely; though this ought to be our grand actuating principle, yet he has graciously permitted, commanded, invited us, to attach our own happiness to this primary object. The Bible exhibits not only a beautiful, but an inseparable combination of both, which delivers us from the danger of unnaturally renouncing our own benefit for the promotion of God's glory, on the one hand; and on the other, from seeking any happiness independent of him, and underived from him. In enjoining us to love him supremely, he has connected an unspeakable blessing with a paramount duty, the highest privilege with the most positive command.

What a triumph for the humble Christian to be assured, that 'the high and lofty One which inhabiteth eternity,' condescends at the same time to dwell in the heart of the contrite;—in *his* heart! To know that God is the God of his life, to *know* that he is even invited to take the Lord for his God. To close with God's offers, to accept his invitations, to receive God as his portion, must surely be more pleasing to our heavenly Father, than separating our happiness from his glory. To disconnect our interests from his goodness, is at once to detract from his perfections, and to obscure the brightness of our own hopes. The declarations of inspired writers are confirmed by the authority of the heavenly hosts. They proclaim that the glory of God and the happiness of his creatures, so far from interfering, are connected with each other. We know but of one anthem composed and sung by angels, and this most harmoniously combines 'the glory of God in the highest with peace on earth and good will to men.'

'The beauty of Scripture,' says the great Saxon reformer, 'consists in pronouns.' This God is *our* God—God, even our *own* God, shall bless us. How delightful the appropriation! To glorify him as being in himself consummate excellence, and to love him from the feeling that this excellence is directed to our felicity! Here modesty would be ingratitude; disinterestedness rebellion. It would be severing ourselves from Him, in whom we live, and move, and are; it would be dissolving the connexion which he has condescended to establish between himself and his creatures.

It has been justly observed, that the Scripture saints make this union the chief ground of their grateful exultation—'*My* strength'—'*my* rock' —'*my* fortress'—'*my* deliverer!' Again—'Let the God of *my* salvation be exalted!' Now take away the pronoun and substitute the article *the*, how comparatively cold is the impression! The consummation of the joy arises from the peculiarity, the intimacy, the endearment of the relation.

Nor to the liberal Christian is the grateful joy diminished, when he blesses his God as 'the God of all them that trust in him.' All general blessings, will he say, all providential mercies, are mine individually, are mine as completely as if no other shared in the enjoyment. Life, light, the earth and heavens, the sun and stars, whatever sustains the body, and recreates the spirits! My obligation is as great as if the mercy had been made purely for me. As great? nay, it is greater—it is augmented by a sense of the millions who participate in the blessing. The same enlargement of the personal obligation holds good, nay rises higher, in the mercies of redemption. The Lord is *my* Saviour as completely as if he had redeemed only me. That he has redeemed 'a great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues,' is diffusion without abatement; it is general participation without individual diminution—Each has all.

In adoring the providence of God, we are apt to be struck with what is new and out of course, while we too much overlook long, habitual, and uninterrupted mercies. But common mercies, if less striking, are more valuable, both because we have them always, and for the reason above assigned, because others share them. The ordinary blessings of life are overlooked for the very reason that they ought to be most prized—because they are most uniformly bestowed. They are most essential to our support, and when once they are withdrawn we begin to find that they are also most essential to our comfort. Nothing raises the price of a blessing like its removal; whereas it was its continuance which should have taught us its value. We require novelties to awaken our gratitude, not considering that it is the duration of mercies which enhances their value. We want fresh excitements. We consider mercies long enjoyed as things of course, as things to which we have a sort of presumptive claim; as if God had no right to withdraw what he had once bestowed; as if he were obliged to continue what he has once been pleased to confer.

But that the sun has shone unremittingly from the day that God created him, is not a less stupendous exertion of power than that the hand which fixed him in the heavens, and marked out his progress through them, once said by his servant, 'Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon.' That he has gone on in his strength, driving his uninterrupted career, and 'rejoicing as a giant to run his course,' for six thousand years, is a more astonishing exhibition of Omnipotence than that he should have been once suspended

by the hand which set him in motion. That the ordinances of heaven, that the established laws of nature, should have been for one day interrupted to serve a particular occasion, is a less real wonder, and certainly a less substantial blessing, than that in such a multitude of ages they should have pursued their appointed course, for the comfort of the whole system:

> For ever singing as they shine
> The hand that made us is divine.

As the affections of the Christian ought to be set on things above, so it is for them that his prayers will be chiefly addressed. God in promising to 'give those who delight in him the desire of their heart,' could never mean temporal things; for these they might desire improperly as to the object, and inordinately as to the degree. The promise relates principally to spiritual blessings. He not only gives us these mercies, but the very desire to obtain them is also his gift. Here our prayer requires no qualifying, no conditioning, no limitation. We cannot err in our choice, for God himself is the object of it; we cannot exceed in the degree, unless it were possible to love him too well, or to please him too much.

We should pray for worldly comforts, and for a blessing on our earthly plans, though lawful in themselves, conditionally, and with a reservation: because after having been earnest in our requests for them, it may happen that when we come to the petition 'thy will be done,' we may in these very words be praying that our previous petitions may not be granted. In this brief request consists the vital principle, the essential spirit of prayer. God shows his munificence in encouraging us to ask most earnestly for the greatest things, by promising that the smaller 'shall be added unto us.' We therefore acknowledge his liberality most when we request the highest favours. He manifests his infinite superiority to earthly fathers by chiefly delighting to confer those spiritual gifts, which *they* less solicitously desire for their children than those worldly advantages on which God sets so little value.

Nothing short of a sincere devotedness to God, can enable us to maintain an equality of mind, under unequal circumstances. We murmur that we have not the things we ask amiss, not knowing that they are withheld by the same mercy by which the things that are good for us are granted. Things good in themselves may not be good for us. A resigned spirit is the proper disposition to prepare us for receiving mercies, or for having them denied. Resignation of soul, like the allegiance of a good subject, is always in readiness, though not in action: whereas an impatient mind is a spirit of disaffection always prepared to revolt, when the will of the sovereign is in opposition to that of the subject. This seditious principle is the infallible characteristic of an unrenewed mind.

A sincere love of God will make us thankful when our supplications are granted, and patient and cheerful when they are denied. He who feels his heart rise against any divine dispensation, ought not to rest till by serious meditation and earnest prayer it be moulded into submission. A habit of acquiescence in the will of God, will so operate on the faculties of his mind, that even his judgment will embrace the conviction, that what he once so ardently desired, would not have been that good thing, which his blindness had conspired with his wishes to make him believe it to be. He will recollect the many instances in which if his importunity had prevailed, the thing which ignorance requested, and wisdom denied, would have insured his misery. Every fresh disappointment will teach him to distrust himself, and to confide in God. Experience will instruct him that there may be a better way of hearing our requests than that of granting them. Happy for us that he to whom they are addressed knows which is best, and acts upon that knowledge.

> Still lift for good the supplicating voice,
> But leave to Heaven the measure and the choice;
> Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
> Secure whate'er he gives, he gives the best.

We should endeavour to render our private devotions effectual remedies for our own particular sins. Prayer against sin in general is too indefinite to reach the individual case. We must bring it home to our own heart, else we may be confessing another man's sins and overlooking our own. If we have any predominant fault, we should pray more especially against that fault. If we pray for any virtue of which we particularly stand in need, we should dwell on our own deficiencies in that virtue, till our souls become deeply affected with our want of it. Our prayers should be circumstantial, not, as was before observed, for the information of infinite wisdom, but for the stirring up of our own dull affections. And as the recapitulation of our wants tends to keep up a sense of our dependence, the enlarging on our especial mercies will tend to keep alive a sense of gratitude. While indiscriminate petitions, confessions, and thanksgivings leave the mind to wander in indefinite devotion and unaffecting generalities, without personality and without appropriation. It must be obvious that we except those grand universal points in which all have an equal interest, and which must always form the essence of public prayer.

On the blessing attending importunity in prayer, the Gospel is abundantly explicit. God perhaps delays to give that we may persevere in asking. He may require importunity for our own sakes, that the frequency and urgency of the petition may bring our hearts into that frame to which he will be favourable.

As we ought to live in a spirit of obedience to his commands, so we should live in a frame of waiting for his blessings on our prayers, and in a spirit of gratitude when we have obtained it. This is that 'preparation of the heart' which would always keep us in a posture for duty. If we desert the duty because an immediate blessing does not visibly attend it, it shows that we do not serve God out of conscience, but selfishness: that we grudge expending on him that service which brings us in no immediate interest. Though he grant not our petition, let us never be tempted to withdraw our application.

Our reluctant devotions may remind us of

the remark of a certain political wit, who apologized for his late attendance in parliament, by his being detained while a party of soldiers were *dragging a volunteer* to his duty. How many excuses do we find for not being in time! How many apologies for brevity! How many evasions for neglect! How unwilling, too often, are we to come into the divine presence, how reluctant to remain in it! Those hours which are least valuable for business, which are least seasonable for pleasure, we commonly give to religion. Our energies which were so exerted in the society we have just quitted, are sunk as we approach the divine presence. Our hearts, which were all alacrity in some frivolous conversation, become cold and inanimate, as if it were the natural property of devotion to freeze the affections. Our animal spirits, which so readily performed their functions before, now slacken their vigour and lose their vivacity. The sluggish body sympathizes with the unwilling mind, and each promotes the deadness of the other; both are slow in listening to the call of duty; both are soon weary in performing it. As prayer requires all the energies of the compound being of man, so we too often feel as if there were a conspiracy of body, soul and spirit, to disincline and disqualify us for it.

When the heart is once sincerely turned to religion, we need not, every time we pray, examine into every truth, and seek for conviction over and over again; but assume that those doctrines are true, the truth of which we have already proved. From a general and fixed impression of these principles, will result a taste, a disposedness, a love, so intimate, that the convictions of the understanding will become the affections of the heart.

To be deeply impressed with a few fundamental truths, to digest them thoroughly, to meditate on them seriously, to pray over them fervently, to get them deeply rooted in the heart, will be more productive of faith and holiness, than to labour after variety, ingenuity or elegance. The indulgence of imagination will rather distract than edify. Searching after ingenious thoughts will rather divert the attention from God to ourselves, than promote fixedness of thought, singleness of intention, and devotedness of spirit. Whatever is subtil and refined, is in danger of being unscriptural. If we do not guard the mind it will learn to wander in quest of novelties. It will learn to set more value on original thoughts than devout affections. It is the business of prayer to cast down imaginations which gratify the natural activity of the mind, while they leave the heart unhumbled.

We should confine ourselves to the present business of the present moment; we should keep the mind in a state of perpetual dependence; we should entertain no long views. 'Now is the accepted time.'—'To day we must hear his voice.'—'Give us *this* day our daily bread.' The manna will not keep till to-morrow: to-morrow will have its own wants, and must have its own petitions. To-morrow we must seek the bread of heaven afresh.

We should, however, avoid coming to our devotions with unfurnished minds. We should be always laying in materials for prayer, by a diligent course of serious reading, by treasuring up in our minds the most important truths. If we rush into the divine presence with a vacant, or ignorant, or unprepared mind, with a heart full of the world; as we shall feel no disposition or qualification for the work we are about to engage in, so we cannot expect that our petitions will be heard or granted. There must be some congruity between the heart and the object, some affinity between the state of our minds and the business in which they are employed, if we would expect success in the work.

We are often deceived, both as to the principle and the effect of our prayers. When from some external cause the heart is glad, the spirits light, the thoughts ready, the tongue voluble, a kind of spontaneous eloquence is the result; with this we are pleased, and this ready flow we are willing to impose on ourselves for piety.

On the other hand when the mind is dejected; the animal spirits low; the thoughts confused; when apposite words do not readily present themselves, we are apt to accuse our hearts of want of fervour, to lament our weakness, and to mourn that because we have had no pleasure in praying, our prayers have, therefore, not ascended to the throne of mercy. In both cases we perhaps judge ourselves unfairly. These unready accents, these faltering praises, these ill expressed petitions, may find more acceptance than the florid talk with which we were so well satisfied: the latter consisted, it may be, of shining thoughts floating on the fancy, eloquent words dwelling only on the lips: the former was the sighing of a contrite heart, abased by the feeling of its own unworthiness, and awed by the perfections of a holy and heart-searching God. The heart is dissatisfied with its own dull and tasteless repetitions, which, with all their imperfections, infinite goodness may perhaps hear with favour.* We may not only be elated with the fluency, but even with the fervency of our prayers. Vanity may grow out of the very act of renouncing it, and we may begin to feel proud at having humbled ourselves so eloquently.

There is, however, a strain and spirit of prayer equally distinct from that facility and copiousness for which we certainly are never the better in the sight of God, and from that constraint and dryness for which we may be never the worse. There is a simple, solid, pious strain of prayer, in which the supplicant is so filled and occupied with a sense of his own dependence, and of the importance of the things for which he asks, and so persuaded of the power and grace of God through Christ to give him those things, that while he is engaged in it, he does not merely imagine, but feels assured that God is nigh to him as a reconciled Father, so that every burden and doubt are taken off

* Of this sort of repetitions, our admirable church liturgy has been accused as a fault; but this defect, if it be one, happily accommodates itself to our infirmities. Where is the favoured being whose attention never wanders, whose heart accompanies his lips in every sentence? Is there no absence of mind in the petitioner, no wandering of the thoughts, no inconstancy of the heart? which these repetitions are wisely calculated to correct, to rouse the dead attention, to bring back the strayed affections.

from his mind. 'He knows,' as Saint John expresses it, 'that he has the petitions he desired of God,' and feels the truth of that promise, 'while they are yet speaking I will hear.' This is the perfection of prayer.

CHAP. VI.

Cultivation of a Devotional Spirit.

To maintain a devotional spirit, two things are especially necessary—habitually to cultivate the disposition, and habitually to avoid whatever is unfavourable to it. Frequent retirement and recollection are indispensable, together with such a general course of reading, as if it do not actually promote the spirit we are endeavouring to maintain, shall never be hostile to it. We should avoid as much as in us lies all such society, all such amusements, as excite tempers which it is the daily business of a Christian to subdue, and all those feelings which it is his constant duty to suppress.

And here may we venture to observe, that if some things which are apparently innocent, and do not assume an alarming aspect, or bear a dangerous character; things which the generality of decorous people affirm, (how truly we know not) to be safe for them; yet if we find that these things stir up in us improper propensities; if they awaken thoughts which ought not to be excited; if they abate our love for religious exercises, or infringe on our time for performing them; if they make spiritual concerns appear insipid; if they wind our heart a little more about the world; in short, if we have formerly found them injurious to our own souls, then let no example or persuasion, no belief of their alleged innocence, no plea of their perfect safety, tempt us to indulge in them. It matters little to *our* security what they are to others. Our business is with ourselves. Our responsibility is on our own heads.—Others cannot know the side on which we are assailable. Let our own unbiassed judgment determine our opinion; let our own experience decide for our own conduct.

In speaking of books, we cannot forbear noticing that very prevalent sort of reading, which is little less productive of evil, little less prejudicial to moral and mental improvement, than that which carries a more formidable appearance. We cannot confine our censure to those more corrupt writings which deprave the heart, debauch the imagination, and poison the principles. Of these the turpitude is so obvious, that no caution on this head, it is presumed, *can* be necessary. But if justice forbids us to confound the insipid with the mischievous, the idle with the vicious, and the frivolous with the profligate, still we can only admit of shades, deep shades we allow, of difference. These works, if comparatively harmless, yet debase the taste, slacken the intellectual nerve, let down the understanding, set the fancy loose, and send it gadding among low and mean objects. They not only run away with the time which should be given to better things, but gradually destroy all taste for better things. They sink the mind to their own standard, and give it a sluggish reluctance, we had almost said, a moral incapacity for every thing above their level. The mind, by long habit of stooping, loses its erectness, and yields to its degradation. It becomes so low and narrow by the littleness of the things which engage it, that it requires a painful effort to lift itself high enough, or to open itself wide enough to embrace great and noble objects. The appetite is vitiated. Excess, instead of producing a surfeit, by weakening the digestion, only induces a loathing for stronger nourishment. The faculties which might have been expanding in works of science, or soaring in the contemplation of genius, become satisfied with the impertinences of the most ordinary fiction, lose their relish for the severity of truth, the elegance of taste, and the soberness of religion. Lulled in the torpor of repose, the intellect doses, and enjoys in its waking dream,

> All the wild trash of sleep, without the rest.

In avoiding books which excite the passions, it would seem strange to include even some devotional works. Yet such as merely kindle warm feelings, are not always the safest. Let us rather prefer those, which, while they tend to raise a devotional spirit, awaken the affections without disordering them; which while they elevate the desires, purify them, which show us our own nature, and lay open its corruptions. Such as show us the malignity of sin, the deceitfulness of our hearts, the feebleness of our best resolutions; such as teach us to pull off the mask from the fairest appearances, and discover every hiding place, where some lurking evil would conceal itself; such as show us not what we appear to others, but what we really are; such as co-operating with our interior feeling, and showing us our natural state, point out our absolute need of a Redeemer, lead us to seek to him for pardon from a conviction that there is no other refuge, no other salvation. Let us be conversant with such writings as teach us that while we long to obtain the remission of our transgressions, we must not desire the remission of our duties. Let us seek for such a Saviour as will not only deliver us from the punishment of sin, but from its dominion also.

And let us ever bear in mind that the end of prayer is not answered when the prayer is finished. We should regard prayer as a means to a farther end. The *act* of prayer is not sufficient, we must cultivate a *spirit* of prayer. And though when the actual devotion is over, we cannot, amid the distractions of company and business, always be thinking of heavenly things; yet the desire, the frame, the propensity, the willingness to return, to them we must, however difficult, endeavour to maintain.

The proper temper for prayer should precede the act. The disposition should be wrought in the mind before the exercise is begun. To bring a proud temper to an humble prayer, a luxurious habit to a self-denying prayer, or a worldly disposition to a spiritually-minded prayer, is a positive anomaly. A habit is more powerful than an act, and a previously indulged temper during

the day will not, it is to be feared, be fully counteracted by the exercise of a few minutes devotion at night.

Prayer is designed for a perpetual renovation of the motives to virtue; if therefore the cause is not followed by its consequence, a consequence inevitable but for the impediments we bring to it, we rob our nature of its highest privilege, and run the danger of incurring a penalty where we are looking for a blessing.

That the habitual tendency of the life should be the preparation for the stated prayer, is naturally suggested to us by our blessed Redeemer in his sermon on the Mount. He announced the precepts of holiness, and their corresponding beatitudes; he gave the spiritual exposition of the law, the direction for alms-giving, the exhortation to love our enemies, nay the essence and spirit of the whole Decalogue, previous to his delivering his own divine prayer as a pattern for ours. Let us learn from this that the preparation of prayer is therefore to live in all those pursuits which we may safely beg of God to bless, and in a conflict with all those temptations into which we pray not to be led.

If God be the centre to which our hearts are tending, every line in our lives must meet in him. With this point in view there will be a harmony between our prayers and our practice, a consistency between devotion and conduct, which will make every part turn to this one end, bear upon this one point. For the beauty of the Christian scheme consists not in parts (however good in themselves) which tend to separate views, and lead to different ends; but it arises from its being one entire, uniform, connected plan, 'compacted of that which every joint, supplieth,' and of which all the parts terminate in this one grand ultimate point.

The design of prayer therefore as we before observed, is not merely to make us devout while we are engaged in it, but that its odour may be diffused through all the intermediate spaces of the day, enter into all its occupations, duties and tempers. Nor must its results be partial, or limited to easy and pleasant duties, but extend to such as are less alluring. When we pray, for instance, for our enemies, the prayer must be rendered practical, must be made a means of softening our spirit, and cooling our resentment toward them. If we deserve their enmity, the true spirit of prayer will put us upon endeavouring to cure the fault which has excited it. If we do not deserve it, it will put us on striving for a placable temper, and we shall endeavour not to let slip so favourable an occasion of cultivating it. There is no such softener of animosity, no such soother of resentment, no such allayer of hatred, as sincere, cordial prayer.

It is obvious, that the precept to pray without ceasing can never mean to enjoin a continual course of actual prayer. But while it more directly enjoins us to embrace all proper occasions of performing this sacred duty, or rather of claiming this valuable privilege, so it plainly implies that we should try to keep up constantly that sense of the divine presence which shall maintain the disposition. In order to this, we should inure our minds to reflection; we should encourage serious thoughts. A good thought barely passing through the mind will make little impression on it. We must arrest it, constrain it to remain with us, expand, amplify, and as it were, take it to pieces. It must be distinctly unfolded, and carefully examined, or it will leave no precise idea: it must be fixed and incorporated, or it will produce no practical effect. We must not dismiss it till it has left some trace on the mind, till it has made some impression on the heart.

On the other hand, if we give the reins to a loose ungoverned fancy, at other times; if we abandon our minds to frivolous thoughts; if we fill them with corrupt images; if we cherish sensual ideas during the rest of the day, can they expect that none of these images will intrude, that none of these impressions will be revived, but that 'the temple into which foul things' have been invited, will be cleansed at a given moment; that worldly thoughts will recede and give place at once to pure and holy thoughts? Will that Spirit grieved by impurity, or resisted by levity, return with his warm beams and cheering influences, to the contaminated mansion from which he has been driven out? Is it wonderful if finding no entrance into a heart filled with vanity he should withdraw himself? We cannot, in retiring into our closets, change our natures as we do our clothes. The disposition we carry thither will be likely to remain with us. We have no right to expect that a new temper will meet us at the door. We can only hope that the spirit we bring thither will be cherished and improved. It is not easy, rather it is not possible, to graft genuine devotion on a life of an opposite tendency; nor can we delight ourselves regularly for a few stated moments, in that God whom we have not been serving during the day. We may indeed to quiet our conscience, take up the employment of prayer, but cannot take up the state of mind which will make the employment beneficial to ourselves, or the prayer acceptable to God, if all the previous day we have been careless of ourselves, and unmindful of our Maker. *They* will not pray differently from the rest of the world, who do not live differently.

What a contradiction is it to lament the weakness, the misery, and the corruption of our nature, in our devotions, and then to rush into a life, though not perhaps of vice, yet of indulgence, calculated to increase that weakness, to inflame those corruptions, and to lead to that misery! There is either no meaning to our prayers, or no sense in our conduct. In the one we mock God, in the other we deceive ourselves.

Will not he who keeps up an habitual intercourse with his Maker, who is vigilant in thought, self-denying in action, who strives to keep his heart from wrong desires, his mind from vain imaginations, and his lips from idle words, bring a more prepared spirit, a more collected mind, be more engaged, more penetrated, more present to the occasion? Will he not feel more delight in this devout exercise, reap more benefit from it, than he who lives at random, prays from custom, and who, though he dares not intermit the form, is a stranger to its spirit? 'O God my heart is ready,' cannot be lawfully uttered by him who is no more prepared.

We speak not here to the self-sufficient formalist, or the careless profligate. Among those whom we now take the liberty to address, are to be found, especially in the higher class of females, the amiable and the interesting, and in many respects the virtuous and correct; characters so engaging, so evidently made for better things, so capable of reaching high degrees of excellence, so formed to give the tone to Christian practice, as well as to fashion; so calculated to give a beautiful impression on that religion which they profess without sufficiently adoring; which they believe without fairly exemplifying; that we cannot forbear taking a tender interest in their welfare; we cannot forbear breathing a fervent prayer that they may yet reach the elevation for which they were intended; that they may hold out a uniform and consistent pattern, of 'whatsoever things are pure, honest, just, lovely, and of good report!' This the Apostle goes on to intimate can only be done by THINKING ON THESE THINGS. Things can only influence our practice as they engage our attention. Would not then a confirmed habit of serious thought tend to correct that inconsideration, which we are willing to hope, more than want of principle, lies at the bottom of the inconsistency we are lamenting.

If, as is generally allowed, the great difficulty of our spiritual life is to make the future predominate over the present, do we not by the conduct we are regretting, aggravate what it is in our power to diminish? Miscalculation of the relative value of things is one of the greatest errors of our moral life. We estimate them in an inverse proportion to their value, as well as to their duration: we lavish earnest and durable thoughts on things so trifling, that they deserve little regard, so brief that they 'perish with the using,' while we bestow only slight attention on things of infinite worth, only transient thoughts on things of eternal duration.

Those who are so far conscientious as not to intermit a regular course of devotion, and who yet allow themselves at the same time to go on in a course of amusements, which excite a directly opposite spirit, are inconceivably augmenting their own difficulties.—They are eagerly heaping up fuel in the day, on the fire which they intend to extinguish in the evening; they are voluntarily adding to the temptations, against which they mean to request grace to struggle. To acknowledge at the same time, that we find it hard to serve God as we ought, and yet to be systematically indulging habits, which must naturally increase the difficulty, makes our characters almost ridiculous, while it renders our duty almost impracticable.

While we make our way more difficult by those very indulgences with which we think to cheer and refresh it, the determined Christian becomes his own pioneer: he makes his path easy by voluntarily clearing it of the obstacles which impede his progress.

These habitual indulgences seem a contradiction to that obvious law, that one virtue always involves another; for we cannot labour after any grace, that of prayer for instance, without resisting whatever is opposite to it. If then we lament, that it is so hard to serve God, let us not by our conduct furnish arguments against ourselves; for, as if the difficulty were not great enough in itself, we are continually heaping up mountains in our way, by indulging in such pursuits and passions, as make a small labour an insurmountable one.

But we may often judge better of our state by the result, than by the act of prayer. Our very defects, our coldness, deadness, wanderings, may leave more contrition on the soul than the happiest turn of thought. The feeling of our wants, the confession of our sins, the acknowledgment of our dependence, the renunciation of ourselves, the supplication for mercy, the application to 'the fountain opened for sin,' the cordial entreaty for the aid of the Spirit, the relinquishment of our own will, resolutions of better obedience, petitions that these resolutions may be directed and sanctified; these are the subjects in which the suppliant should be engaged, by which his thoughts should be absorbed. Can they be so absorbed, if many of the intervening hours are passed in pursuits of a totally different complexion; pursuits which raise the passions which we are seeking to allay? Will the cherished vanities go at our bidding? Will the required dispositions come at our calling? Do we find our tempers so obedient, our passions so obsequious in the other concerns of life? If not, what reason have we to expect their obsequiousness in this grand concern. We should therefore endeavour to believe as we pray, to think as we pray, to feel as we pray, and to act as we pray. Prayer must not be a solitary, independent exercise; but an exercise interwoven with many, and inseparably connected with that golden chain of Christian duties, of which, when so connected, it forms one of the most important links.

Business however must have its period as well as devotion. We were sent into this world to act as well as to pray; active duties must be performed as well as devout exercises. Even relaxation must have its interval, only let us be careful that the indulgence of the one do not destroy the effect of the other; that our pleasures do not encroach on the time or deaden the spirit of our devotions: let us be careful that our cares, occupations, and amusements may be always such that we may not be afraid to implore the divine blessing on them; this is the criterion of their safety and of our duty. Let us endeavour that in each, in all, one continually growing sentiment and feeling, of loving, serving, and pleasing God, maintain its predominant station in the heart.

An additional reason why we should live in the perpetual use of prayer, seems to be, that our blessed Redeemer after having given both the example and the command, while on earth, condescends still to be our unceasing intercessor in heaven. Can we ever cease petitioning for ourselves, when we believe that he never ceases interceding for us?

If we are so unhappy as now to find little pleasure in this holy exercise, that however is so far from being a reason for discontinuing it, that it affords the strongest argument for perseverance. That which was at first a form, will become a pleasure; that which was a burden

will become a privilege; that which we impose upon ourselves as a medicine, will become necessary as an aliment, and desirable as a gratification. That which is now short and superficial, will become copious and solid. The chariot wheel is warmed by its own motion. Use will make that easy which was at first painful. That which is once become easy will soon be rendered pleasant; instead of repining at the performance, we shall be unhappy at the omission. When a man recovering from sickness attempts to walk, he does not discontinue the exercise because he feels himself weak, nor even because the effort is painful. He rather redoubles his exertion. It is from his perseverance that he looks for strength. An additional turn every day diminishes his repugnance, augments his vigour, improves his spirits. That effort which was submitted to because it was salutary, is continued because the feeling of renovated strength renders it delightful.

CHAP. VII.

The Love of God.

Our love to God arises out of want. God's love to us out of fulness. Our indigence draws us to that power which can relieve, and to that goodness which can bless us.—His overflowing love delights to make us partakers of the bounties he graciously imparts, not only in the gifts of his Providence, but in the richer communications of his grace. We can only be said to love God when we endeavour to glorify him, when we desire a participation of his nature, when we study to imitate his perfections.

We are sometimes inclined to suspect the love of God to us. We are too little suspicious of our want of love to him. Yet if we examine the case by evidenc , as we should examine any common question, what real instances can we produce of our love to him?' What imaginable instance can we not produce of his love to us? If neglect, forgetfulness, ingratitude, disobedience, coldness in our affections, deadness in our duty, be evidences of our love to him, such evidences, but such only, we can abundantly allege. If life and all the countless catalogue of mercies that make life pleasant, be proofs of his love to us, these he has given us in hand; if life eternal, if blessedness that knows no measure and no end, be proofs of love, these he has given us in promise—to the Christian we had almost said, he has given them in possession.

It must be an irksome thing to serve a master whom we do not love; a master whom we are compelled to obey, though we think his requisitions hard, and his commands unreasonable; under whose eye we know that we continually live, though his presence is not only undelightful but formidable.

Now every Christian must obey God whether he love him or not; he must act always in his sight, whether he delight him or not; and to a heart of any feeling, to a spirit of any liberality, nothing is so grating as constrained obedience. To love God, to serve him because we love him, is therefore no less our highest happiness, than our most bounden duty. Love makes all labour light. We serve wi.h alacrity, where we love with cordiality.

When the heart is devoted to an object, we require not to be perpetually reminded of our obligations to obey him; they present themselves spontaneously, we fulfil them readily, I had almost said, involuntarily; we think not so much of the service as of the object. The principle which suggests the work inspires the pleasure; to neglect it would be an injury to our feelings. The performance is the gratification. The omission is not more a pain to the conscience, than a wound to the affections. The implantation of this vital root perpetuates virtuous practice, and secures internal peace.

Though we cannot be always thinking of God, we may be always employed in his service. There must be intervals of our communion with him, but there must be no intermission of our attachment to him. The tender father who labours for his children, does not always employ his thoughts about them; he cannot be always conversing with them, or concerning them, yet he is always engaged in promoting their interests. His affection for them is an inwoven principle, of which he gives the most unequivocal evidence, by the assiduousness of his application in their service.

'Thou shouldst love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,' is the primary law of our religion. Yet how apt are we to complain that we *cannot* love God, that we cannot maintain a devout intercourse with him. But would God, who is all justice, have commanded that of which he knew we were incapable? Would he who is all mercy have made our eternal happiness to depend on something which he knew was out of our power to perform, capriciously disqualifying us for the duty he had prescribed? Would he have given the exhortation, and withheld the capacity? This would be to charge Omniscience with folly, and infinite goodness with injustice;—no, when he made duty and happiness inseparable, he neither made our duty impracticable, nor our happiness unattainable. But we are continually flying to false refuges, clinging to false holds, resting on false supports; as they are uncertain they disappoint us, as they are weak they fail us; but as they are numerous, when one fails another presents itself. Till they slip from under us, we never suspect how much we rested upon them. Life glides away in a perpetual succession of these false dependences and successive privations.

There is, as we have elsewhere observed, a striking analogy between the natural and spiritual life; the weakness and helplessness of the Christian resemble those of the infant; neither of them becomes strong, vigorous, and full grown at once, but through a long and often painful course. This keeps up a sense of dependance, and accustoms us to lean on the hand which fosters us. There is in both conditions, an imperceptible chain of depending events, by which we are carried on insensibly to the vigour of maturity. The operation which is not always obvious, is always progressive. By attempting to walk alone we discover our weakness, the ex-

perience of that weakness humbles us, and every fall drives us back to the sustaining hand, whose assistance we vainly flattered ourselves we no longer needed.

In some halcyon moments we are willing to persuade ourselves that religion has made an entire conquest over our heart; that we have renounced the dominion of the world, have conquered our attachment to earthly things. We flatter ourselves that nothing can now again obstruct our entire submission. But we know not what spirit we are of. We say this in the calm of repose and in the stillness of the passions: when our path is smooth, our prospect smiling, danger distant, temptation absent, when we have many comforts and no trials. Suddenly, some loss, some disappointment, some privation tears off the mask, reveals us to ourselves. We at once discover that though the smaller fibres and lesser roots which fasten us down to earth may have been loosened by preceding storms, yet our substantial hold on earth is not shaken, the tap-root is not cut, we are yet fast rooted to the soil, and still stronger tempests must be sent to make us let go our hold.

It might be useful to cultivate the habit of stating our own case as strongly to ourselves as if it were the case of another; to express in so many words, thoughts which are not apt to assume any specific or palpable form; thoughts which we avoid shaping into language, but slur over, generalize, soften, and do away. How indignant, for instance, should we feel, though we ourselves make the complaint, to be told by others, that we do not love our Maker and Preserver. But let us put the question fairly to ourselves. Do we really love him? Do we love him with a supreme, nay even with an equal affection? Is there no friend, no child, no reputation, no pleasure, no society, no possession which we do not prefer to him? It is easy to affirm in a general way that there is not. But let us particularize, individualize the question—bring it home to our own hearts in some actual instance, in some tangible shape. Let us commune with our own consciences, with our own feelings, with our own experience; let us question pointedly and answer honestly. Let us not be more ashamed to detect the fault, than to have been guilty of it.

This then will commonly be the result. Let the friend, child, reputation, possession, pleasure be endangered, but especially let it be taken away by some stroke of Providence. The scales fall from our eyes; we see, we feel, we acknowledge, with brokenness of heart, not only for our loss but for our sin, that though we did love God, yet we loved him not superlatively, and that we loved the blessing, threatened or resumed, still more. But this is one of the cases in which the goodness of God bringeth us to repentance. By the operation of his grace the resumption of the gift brings back the heart to the giver. The Almighty by his Spirit takes possession of the temple from which the idol is driven out. God is re-instated in his rights, and becomes the supreme and undisputed Lord of our reverential affection.

There are three requisites to our proper enjoyment of every earthly blessing which God bestows on us;—a thankful reflection on the goodness of the giver, a deep sense of the unworthiness of the receiver, and a sober recollection of the precarious tenure by which we hold it. The first would make us grateful, the second humble, the last moderate.

But how seldom do we receive his favours in this spirit! As if religious gratitude were to be confined to the appointed days of public thanksgiving, how rarely in common society do we hear any recognition of Omnipotence even on those striking and heart-rejoicing occasions, when, 'with his own right hand, and with his glorious arm he has gotten himself the victory!' Let us never detract from the merit of our valiant leaders, but rather honour them the more for this manifestation of divine power in their favour; but let us never lose sight of him 'who teacheth their hands to war, and their fingers to fight.' Let us never forget that 'He is the Rock, that his work is perfect, and all his ways are judgment.'

How many seem to show not only their want of affiance in God, but that 'he is not in all their thoughts,' by their appearing to leave him entirely out of their concerns, by projecting their affairs without any reference to him, by setting out on the stock of their own unassisted wisdom, contriving and acting independently of God; expecting prosperity in the event, without seeking his direction in the outset, and taking to themselves the whole honour of the success without any recognition of his hand! do they not thus virtually imitate what Sophocles makes his blustering Atheist* boast: 'Let other men expect to conquer with the assistance of the gods, I intend to gain honour without them.'

The Christian will rather rejoice to ascribe the glory of his prosperity to the same hand to which our own manly queen gladly ascribed her signal victory. When after the defeat of the Armada, impiously termed invincible, her enemies, in order to lower the value of her agency, alleged that the victory was not owing to her, but to God who had raised the storm, she heroically declared that the visible interference of God in her favour was that part of the success from which she derived the truest honour.

Incidents and occasions every day arise, which not only call on us to trust in God, but which furnish us with suitable occasion of vindicating, if I may presume to use the expression, the character and conduct of the Almighty in the government of human affairs; yet there is no duty which we perform with less alacrity Strange, that we should treat the Lord of heaven and earth with less confidence than we exercise towards each other! That we should vindicate the honour of a common acquaintance with more zeal than that of our insulted Maker and Preserver!

If we hear a friend accused of any act of injustice, though we cannot bring any positive proof why he should be acquitted of this specific charge, yet we resent the injury offered to his character; we clear him of the individual allegation on the ground of his general conduct, inferring that from the numerous instances we

* Ajax.

can produce of his rectitude on other occasions, he cannot be guilty of the alleged injustice. We reason from analogy, and in general we reason fairly. But when we presume to judge of the Most High, instead of vindicating his rectitude on the same grounds, under a providence seemingly severe; instead of reverting, as in the case of our friend, to the thousand instances we have formerly tasted of his kindness; instead of giving God the same credit we give to his erring creature, and inferring from his past goodness, that the present inexplicable dispensation must be consistent, though we cannot explain how, with his general character, we mutinously accuse him of inconsistency, nay of injustice. We admit virtually the most monstrous anomaly in the character of the perfect God.

But what a clue has revelation furnished to the intricate labyrinth which seems to involve the conduct which we impiously question! It unrols the volume of divine Providence, lays open the mysterious map of infinite wisdom, throws a bright light on the darkest dispensations, vindicates the inequality of appearances, and points to that blessed region, where to all who have truly loved and served God, every apparent wrong shall be approved to have been unimpeachably right, every affliction a mercy, and the severest trials the shortest blessings.

So blind has sin made us, that the glory of God is concealed from us, by the very means which, could we discern aright, would display it. That train of second causes, which he has so marvellously disposed, obstructs our view of himself. We are so filled with wonder at the immediate effect, that our short sight penetrates not to the first cause. To see him as he is, is reserved to be the happiness of a better world. We shall then indeed 'admire him in his saints, and in all them that believe;' we shall see how necessary it was for those whose bliss is now so perfect, to have been poor, and despised, and oppressed. We shall see why the 'ungodly were in such prosperity.' Let us give God credit here for what we shall then fully know; let us adore now, what we shall understand hereafter.

They who take up religion on a false ground will never adhere to it. If they adopt it merely for the peace and pleasantness it brings, they will desert it as soon as they find their adherence to it will bring them into difficulty, distress, or discredit. It seldom answers therefore to attempt making proselytes by hanging out false colours. The Christian 'endures as seeing him who is invisible.' He who adopts religion for the sake of immediate enjoyment, will not do a virtuous action that is disagreeable to himself; nor resist a temptation that is alluring, present pleasure being his motive. There is no sure basis for virtue but the love of God in Christ Jesus, and the bright reversion for which that love is pledged. Without this, as soon as the paths of piety become rough and thorny, we shall stray into pleasant pastures.

Religion, however, has her own peculiar advantages. In the transaction of all worldly affairs, there are many and great difficulties. There may be several ways out of which to choose. Men of the first understanding are not always certain which of these ways is the best. Persons of the deepest penetration are full of doubt and perplexity; their minds are undecided how to act, lest while they pursue one road, they may be neglecting another which might better have conducted them to their proposed end.

In religion the case is different, and, in this respect, easy. As a Christian can have but one object in view, he is also certain there is but one way of attaining it. Where there is but one end, it prevents all possibility of choosing wrong —where there is but one road, it takes away all perplexity as to the course of pursuit. That we so often wander wide of the mark, is not from any want of plainness in the path, but from the perverseness of our will in not choosing it, from the indolence of our mind in not following it up.

In our attachments to earthly things, even the most innocent, there is always a danger of excess; but from this danger we are here perfectly exempt, for there is no possibility of excess in our love to that Being who has demanded *the whole heart.* This peremptory requisition cuts off all debate. Had God required only a portion, even were it a large portion, we might be puzzled in settling the quantum. We might be plotting how large a part we might venture to keep back without absolutely forfeiting our safety; we might be haggling for deductions, bargaining for abatements, and be perpetually compromising with our Maker. But the injunction is entire, the command is definitive, the portion is unequivocal. Though it is so compressed in the expression, yet it is so expansive and ample in the measure: it is so distinct a claim, so imperative a requisition of *all* the faculties of the mind and strength; *all* the affections of the heart and soul: that there is not the least opening left for litigation; no place for any thing but absolute unreserved compliance.

Every thing which relates to God is infinite. We must therefore while we keep our hearts humble, keep our aims high. Our highest services indeed are but finite, imperfect. But as God is unlimited in goodness, he should have our unlimited love. The best we can offer is poor, but let us not withhold that best. He deserves incomparably more than we have to give. Let us not give him less than all. If he has ennobled our corrupt nature with spiritual affections, let us not refuse their noblest aspirations, to their noblest object. Let him not behold us so prodigally lavishing our affections on the meanest of his bounties, as to have nothing left for himself. As the standard of every thing in religion is high, let us endeavour to act in it with the highest intention of mind, with the largest use of our faculties. Let us obey him with the most intense love, adore him with the most fervent gratitude. Let us 'praise him according to his excellent greatness.' Let us serve him with all the strength of our capacity, with all the devotion of our will.

Grace being a new principle added to our natural powers, as it determines the desires to a higher object, so it adds vigour to their activity. We shall best prove its dominion over us by desiring to exert ourselves in the cause of heaven with the same energy with which we once ex

erted ourselves in the cause of the world. The world was too little to fill our whole capacity. Scaliger lamented how much was lost because so fine a poet as Claudian, in his choice of a subject, wanted matter worthy of his talent; but it is the felicity of the Christian to have chosen a theme to which all the powers of his heart and of his understanding will be found inadequate. It is the glory of religion to supply an object worthy of the entire consecration of every power, faculty and affection of an immaterial, immortal being.

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CHAP. VIII.

The Hand of God to be acknowledged in the daily circumstances of life.

If we would indeed love God, let us 'acquaint ourselves with him.' The word of inspiration has assured us that there is no other way to 'be at peace.' As we cannot love an unknown God, so neither can we know him, or even approach toward that knowledge, but on the terms which he himself holds out to us; neither will he save us but in the method which he himself has prescribed. His very perfections, the just objects of our adoration, all stand in the way of creatures so guilty. His justice is the flaming sword which excludes us from the Paradise we have forfeited. His purity is so opposed to our corruptions, his omnipotence to our infirmity, his wisdom to our folly, that had we not to plead the great propitiation, those very attributes which are now our trust, would be our terror. The most opposite images of human conception, the widest extremes of human language, are used for the purpose of showing what God is to us in our natural state, and what he is under the Christian dispensation. The 'consuming fire' is transformed into essential love.

But as we cannot find out the Almighty to perfection, so we cannot love him with that pure flame, which animates glorified spirits. But there is a preliminary acquaintance with him, an initial love of him, for which he has furnished us with means by his works, by his word, and by his Spirit. Even in this weak and barren soil some germs will shoot, some blossoms will open, of that celestial plant, which, watered by the dews of heaven, and ripened by the Sun of righteousness, will, in a more genial clime, expand into the fulness of perfection, and bear immortal fruits in the Paradise of God.

A person of a cold phlegmatic temper, who laments that he wants that fervor in his love of the Supreme Being, which is apparent in more ardent characters, may take comfort, if he find the same indifference respecting his worldly attachments. But if his affections are intense towards the perishable things of earth, while they are dead to such as are spiritual, it does not prove that he is destitute of passions, but only that they are not directed to the proper object. If, however, he love God with that measure of feeling with which God has endowed him, he will not be punished or rewarded because the stock is greater or smaller than that of some other of his fellow creatures.

In those intervals when our sense of divine things is weak and low, we must not give way to distrust, but warm our hearts with the recollection of our best moments. Our motives to love and gratitude are not now diminished, but our spiritual frame is lower, our natural spirits are weaker. Where there is languor there will be discouragements. But we must not desist. 'Faint yet pursuing,' must be the Christian's motto.

There is more merit (if ever we dare apply so arrogant a word to our worthless efforts) in persevering under depression and discomfort, than in the happiest flow of devotion, when the tide of health and spirits runs high. Where there is less gratification there is more disinterestedness. We ought to consider it as a cheering evidence, that our love may be equally pure though it is not equally fervent, when we persist in serving our heavenly Father with the same constancy, though it may please him to withdraw from us the same consolations. Perseverance may bring us to the very dispositions the absence of which we are lamenting—'O tarry thou the Lord's leisure, be strong and he shall comfort thy heart.'

We are too ready to imagine that we are religious, because we know something of religion. We appropriate to ourselves the pious sentiments we read, and we talk as if the thoughts of other men's heads were really the feelings of our own hearts. But piety has not its seat in the memory, but in the affections, for which however the memory is an excellent purveyor, though a bad substitute. Instead of an undue elation of heart when we peruse some of the psalmist's beautiful effusions, we should feel a deep self-abasement at the reflection, that however our case may sometimes resemble his, yet how inapplicable to our hearts are the ardent expressions of his repentance, the overflowing of his gratitude, the depth of his submission, the entireness of his self-dedication, the fervour of his love. But he who indeed can once say with him, 'Thou art my portion,' will, like him, surrender himself unreservedly to his service.

It is important that we never suffer our faith, any more than our love, to be depressed or elevated, by mistaking for its own operations, the ramblings of a busy imagination. The steady principle of faith must not look for its character to the vagaries of a mutable and fantastic fancy —*La folle de la Maison*, as she has been well denominated. Faith which has once fixed her foot on the immutable Rock of Ages, fastened her firm eye on the Cross, and stretched out her triumphant hand to seize the promised crown, will not suffer her stability to depend on this ever-shifting faculty; she will not be driven to despair by the blackest shades of its pencil, nor be betrayed into a careless security, by its most flattering and vivid colours.

One cause of the fluctuations of our faith is, that we are too ready to judge the Almighty by our own low standard. We judge him not by his own declarations of what he is, and what he will do, but by our own feelings and practices. We ourselves are too little disposed to forgive those who have offended us. We therefore conclude that God cannot pardon our offences

We suspect him to be implacable, because we are apt to be so, and we are unwilling to believe that he can pass by injuries, because we find it so hard to do it. When we do forgive, it is grudgingly and superficially; we therefore infer that God cannot forgive freely and fully. We make a hypocritical distinction between forgiving and forgetting injuries. God clears away the score when he grants the pardon. He does not only say, 'thy sins and thy iniquities will I forgive,' but 'I will remember them no more.'

We are disposed to urge the smallness of our offences, as a plea for their forgiveness; whereas God to exhibit the boundlessness of his own mercy, has taught us to allege a plea directly contrary—'Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is *great.*' To natural reason this argument of David is most extraordinary. But while he felt that the greatness of his own iniquity left him no resource, but in the mercy of God, he felt that God's mercy was greater even than his own sin. What a large, what a magnificent idea does it give us of the divine power and goodness, that the believer, instead of pleading the smallness of his own offences as a motive for pardon, pleads only the abundance of the divine compassion!

We are told that it is the duty of the Christian to 'seek God.' We assent to the truth of the proposition. Yet it would be less irksome to corrupt nature, in pursuit of this knowledge, to go a pilgrimage to distant lands, than to seek him within our own hearts. Our own heart is the true *terra incognitia:* a land more foreign and unknown to us, then the regions of the polar circle. Yet that heart is the place, in which an acquaintance with God must be sought. It is there we must worship him, if we would worship him in spirit and in truth.

But, alas! the heart is not the home of a worldly man, it is scarcely the home of a Christian. If business and pleasure are the natural element of the generality—a dreary vacuity, sloth and insensibility, too often worse than both, disincline, disqualify too many Christians for the pursuit.

I have observed, and I think I have heard others observe, that a common beggar had rather screen himself under the wall of a churchyard, if overtaken by a shower of rain, though the church door stand invitingly open, than take shelter within it, while divine service is performing. It is a less annoyance to him to be drenched with the storm, than to enjoy the convenience of a shelter and a seat, if he must enjoy them at the heavy price of listening to the sermon.

While we condemn the beggar, let us look into our own hearts; happy if we cannot there detect somewhat of the same indolence, indisposedness, and distaste to serious things! Happy, if we do not find, that we prefer not only our pleasures and enjoyments, but, I had almost said, our very pains, and vexations, and inconveniences, to communing with our Maker! Happy, if we had not rather be absorbed in our petty cares, and little disturbances, provided we can contrive to make them the means of occupying our thoughts, filling up our minds, and drawing them away from that devout intercourse, which demands the liveliest exercise of our rational powers, the highest elevation of our spiritual affections! Is it not to be apprehended, that the dread of being driven to this sacred intercourse is one grand cause of that activity and restlessness, which sets the world in such perpetual motion?

Though we are ready to express a general sense of our confidence in Almighty goodness, yet what definite meaning do we annex to the expression? What practical evidences have we to produce, that we really do trust him? Does this trust deliver us from worldly anxiety? Does it exonerate us from the same perturbation of spirits, which those endure who make no such profession? Does it relieve the mind from doubt and distrust? Does it tranquillize the troubled heart, does it regulate its disorders, and compose its fluctuations? Does it sooth us under irritation? Does it support under trials? Does it fortify us against temptations? Does it lead us to repose a full confidence in that Being whom we profess to trust? Does it produce in us, 'that work of rightoousness, which is peace,' that effect of righteousness, which is 'quietness and assurance for ever?' Do we commit ourselves and our concerns to God in word, or in reality? Does this implicit reliance simplify our desires? Does it induce us to credit the testimony of his word and the promises of his Gospel? Do we not even entertain some secret suspicions of his faithfulness and truth in our hearts, when we persuade others and try to persuade ourselves that we unreservedly trust him.

In the preceding chapter we endeavoured to illustrate our want of love to God, by our not being as forward to *vindicate* the divine conduct as to justify that of an acquaintance. The same illustration may express our reluctance to *trust* in God. If a tried friend engage to do us a kindness, though he may not think it necesssary, to explain the particular manner in which he intends to do it, we repose on his word. Assured of the result, we are neither very inquisitive about the mode nor the detail. But do we treat our Almighty friend with the same liberal confidence? Are we not murmuring because we cannot see all the process of his administration, and follow his movements step by step? Do we wait the development of his plan, in full assurance that the issue will be ultimately good? Do we trust that he is as abundantly willing as able, to do more for us than we can ask or think, if by our suspicions we do not offend him, if by our infidelity we do not provoke him? In short, do we not think ourselves utterly undone, when we have only but Providence to trust to?

We are perhaps ready enough to acknowledge God in our mercies, nay, we confess him in the ordinary enjoyments of life. In some of these common mercies, as in a bright day, a refreshing shower, a delightful scenery, a kind of sensitive pleasure, an hilarity of spirits, a sort of animal enjoyment, though of a refined nature, mixes itself with our devotional feelings; and though we confess and adore the bountiful Giver, we do it with a little mixture of self-complacency, and of human gratification, which he pardons and accepts.

But we must look for him in scenes less ani

mating, we must acknowledge him on occasions less exhilarating, less sensibly gratifying. It is not only in his promises that God manifests his mercy. His threatenings are proofs of the same compassionate love. He threatens, not to punish, but by the warning, to snatch from the punishment.

We may also trace marks of his hand, not only in the awful visitations of life, not only in the severer dispensations of his providence, but in vexations so trivial that we should hesitate to suspect that they are providential appointments, did we not know that our daily life is made up of unimportant circumstances rather than of great events. As they are, however, of sufficient importance to exercise the Christian tempers and affections, we may trace the hand of our heavenly Father in those daily little disappointments and hourly vexations, which occur even in the most prosperous state, and which are inseparable from the condition of humanity.—We must trace that same beneficent hand, secretly at work for our purification, our correction, our weaning from life; in the imperfections and disagreeableness of those who may be about us; in the perverseness of those with whom we transact business, and in those interruptions which break in upon our favourite engagements.

We are perhaps too much addicted to our innocent delights, or we are too fond of our leisure, of our learned, even of our religious leisure. But while we say it is good for us to be here, the divine vision is withdrawn, and we are compelled to come down from the mount. Or, perhaps, we do not improve our retirement to the purposes for which it was granted, and to which we had resolved to devote it, and our time is broken in upon to make us more sensible of its value. Or we feel a complacency in our leisure, a pride in our books; perhaps we feel proud of the good things we are intending to say, or meditating to write, or preparing to do. A check is necessary, yet it is given in a way almost imperceptible. The hand that gives it is unseen, is unsuspected, yet it is the same gracious hand which directs the more important events of life. An importunate application, a disqualifying, though not severe indisposition, a family avocation, a letter important to the writer, but unseasonable to us, breaks in on our projected privacy; calls us to a sacrifice of our inclination, to a renunciation of our own will. These incessant trials of temper, if well improved, may be more salutary to the mind, than the finest passage we had intended to read, or the sublimest sentiment we had fancied we should write.

Instead then of going in search of great mortifications, as a certain class of pious writers recommend, let us cheerfully bear and diligently improve these inferior trials which God prepares for us. Submission to a cross which he inflicts, to a disappointment which he sends, to a contradiction of our self-love, which he appoints, is a far better exercise than great penances of our own choosing. Perpetual conquests over impatience, ill-temper, and self-will, indicate a better spirit than any self-imposed mortification. We may traverse oceans, and scale mountains on uncommanded pilgrimages, without pleasing God; we may please him without any other exertion than by crossing our own will.

Perhaps you had been busying your imagination with some projected scheme, not only lawful, but laudable. The design was radically good, but the supposed value of your own agency, might too much interfere, might a little taint the purity of your best intentions. The motives were so mixed that it was difficult to separate them. Sudden sickness obstructed the design. You naturally lament the failure, not perceiving that, however good the work might be for others, the sickness was better for yourself. An act of charity was in your intention, but God saw that your soul required the exercise of a more difficult virtue; that humility and resignation, that the patience, acquiescence, and contrition of a sick bed, were more necessary for you. He accepts the meditated work as far as it was designed for his glory, but he calls his servant to other duties, which were more salutary for him, and of which the master was the better judge. He sets aside his work, and orders him to wait, the more difficult part of his task. As far as your motive was pure, you will receive the reward of your unperformed charity, though not the gratification of the performance. If it was not pure, you are rescued from the danger attending a right action performed on a worldly principle. You may be the better Christian though one good deed is subtracted from your catalogue.

By a life of activity and usefulness, you had perhaps attracted the public esteem.—An animal activity had partly stimulated your exertions. The love of reputation begins to mix itself with your better motives. You do not, it is presumed, act entirely or chiefly for human applause; but you are too sensible to it. It is a delicious poison which begins to infuse itself into your purest cup. You acknowledge indeed the sublimity of higher motives, but do you never feel that, separated from this accompaniment of self, they would be too abstracted, too speculative, and might become too little productive both of activity and of sensible gratification? You begin to feel the human incentive necessary, and your spirits would flag if it were withdrawn.

This sensibility to praise would gradually tarnish the purity of your best actions. He who sees your heart, as well as your works, mercifully snatches you from the perils of prosperity. Malice is awakened. Your most meritorious actions are ascribed to the most corrupt motives. You are attacked just where your character is least vulnerable. The enemies whom your success raised up, are raised up by God, less to punish than to save you. We are far from meaning that he can ever be the author of evil; he does not excite or approve the calumny, but he uses your calumniators as instruments of your purification. Your fame was too dear to you. It is a costly sacrifice, but God requires it. It must be offered up. You would gladly compound for any, for every other offering, but this is the offering he chooses: and while he graciously continues to employ you for his glory, he thus teaches you to renounce your own. He sends this trial as a test, by

which you are to try yourself. He thus instructs you not to abandon your Christian exertions, but to elevate the principle which inspired them, to defecate it from all impure admixtures.

By thus stripping the most engaging employments of this dangerous delight, by infusing some drops of salutary bitterness into our sweetest draught, by some of these ill-tasted but wholesome mercies, he graciously compels us to return to himself. By taking away the stays by which we are perpetually propping up our frail delights, they fall to the ground. We are as it were driven back to Him, who condescends to receive us, after we have tried every thing else, and after every thing else has failed us, and though he knows we should not have returned to Him if every thing else had *not* failed us. He makes us feel our weakness, that we may have recourse to his strength; he makes us sensible of our hitherto unperceived sins, that we may take refuge in his everlasting compassion

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CHAP. IX.

Christianity Universal in its Requisitions.

It is not unusual to see people get rid of some of the most awful injunctions, and emancipate themselves from some of the most solemn requisitions of Scripture, by affecting to believe that they do not apply to *them*. They consider them as belonging exclusively to the first age of the Gospel, and to the individuals to whom they were immediately addressed; consequently the necessity to observe them does not extend to persons under an established Christianity, to hereditary Christians.

These exceptions are particularly applied to some of the leading doctrines, so forcibly and repeatedly pressed in the Epistles. The reasoners endeavour to persuade themselves that it was only the Ephesians, 'who are dead in trespasses and sins'—that it was only the Galatians who are enjoined 'not to fulfil the lusts of the flesh'—that it was only the Philippians who were 'enemies to the cross of Christ.' They shelter themselves under the comfortable assurances of a geographical security. As they know that they are neither Ephesians, Galatians, nor Philippians, they have of course little or nothing to do with the reproofs, expostulations, or threatenings which were originally directed to the converts among those people. They console themselves with the belief that it was only these pagans who 'walked according to the course of this world'—who were 'strangers from the covenants of promise'—and who were 'without God in the world.'

But these self-satisfied critics would do well to learn that not only 'circumcision or uncircumcision,'—but baptism or no baptism 'availeth nothing,' (I mean as a mere form) 'but a new creature.' An irreligious professor of Christianity is as much 'a stranger and foreigner, as a heathen; he is no more 'a fellow citizen of the saints,' and of the household of God than a Colosian or Galatian was, before the Christian dispensation had reached them.

But the persons to whom the Apostles preached had, before their conversion no vices to which we are not liable, they had certainly difficulties afterwards from which we are happily exempt There were indeed differences between them and us in external situation, in local circumstances, references which we ought certainly to take into the account in perusing the epistles We allow that they were immediately, but we do not allow that they were exclusively, applicable to them. It would have been too limited an object for inspiration to have confined its instructions to any one period, when its purpose was the conversion and instruction of the whole unborn world. That these converts were miraculously 'called out of darkness into the mavellous light of the gospel'—that they were changed from gross blindness to a rapid illumination—that the embracing the new faith exposed them to persecution, reproach and ignominy—that the few had to struggle against the world—that laws, principalities and powers which support our faith opposed theirs—these are distinctions of which we ought not to lose sight: nor should we forget that not only all the disadvantages lay on their side in this antecedent condition, but that also all the superiority lies on ours in that which is subsequent.

But however the condition of the external state of the Church might differ, there can be no necessity for any difference in the interior state of the individual Christian. On whatever high principles of devotedness to God and love to man *they* were called to act, we are called to act on precisely the same. If their faith was called to more painful exertions, if their self-denial to harder sacrifices, if their renunciation of earthly things to severer trials, let us thankfully remember this would naturally be the case at the first introduction of a religion which had to combat with the pride, prejudices and enmity of corrupt nature, invested with temporal power:—That the hostile party would not fail to perceive how much the new religion opposed itself to their corruptions, and that it was introducing a spirit which was in direct and avowed hostility to the spirit of the world.

But while we are deeply thankful for the diminished difficulties of an established faith, let us never forget that Christianity allows of no diminution in the temper, of no abatement in the spirit, which constituted a Christian in the first ages of the church.

Christianity is precisely the same religion now as it was when our Saviour was upon earth. The spirit of the world is exactly the same now as it was then. And if the most eminent of the apostles, under the immediate guidance of inspiration were driven to lament their conflicts with their own corrupt nature, the power of temptation, combining with their natural propensities to evil, how can we expect that a lower faith, a slackened zeal, an abated diligence, and an inferior holiness will be accepted in *us?* Believers *then* were not called to higher degress of purity, to a more elevated devotion, to a deeper humility, to greater rectitude, patience and sincerity, than they are called to in the age in which we live. The promises are not limited to the period in which they were made, the aid of the Spirit is not confined to those on whom it

was first poured out. It was expressly declared by St. Peter on its first effusion, to be promised not only 'to them and their children, but to all who were afar off, even to as many as the Lord their God should call.'

If then the same salvation be now offered as was offered at first, is it not obvious that it must be worked out in the same way? And as the same Gospel retains the same authority in all ages, so does it maintain the same universality among all ranks. Christianity has no by-laws, no particular exemptions, no individual immunities. That there is no appropriate way of attaining salvation for a prince or a philosopher, is probably one reason why greatness and wisdom have so often rejected it. But if rank cannot plead its privileges, genius cannot claim its distinctions. That Christianity does not owe its success to the arts of rhetoric or the sophistry of the schools, but that God intended by it 'to make foolish the wisdom of this world,' actually explains why 'the disputers of this world' have always been its enemies.

It would have been unworthy of the infinite God to have imparted a partial religion. There is but one 'gate,' and that a 'strait' one; but one 'way,' and that a 'narrow' one; there is but one salvation and that a common one. The Gospel enjoins the same principles of love and obedience on all of every condition; offers the same aids under the same exigencies; the same supports under all trials; the same pardon to all penitents; the same Saviour to all believers; the same rewards to all who 'endure to the end.' The temptations of one condition and the trials of another may call for the exercise of different qualities, for the performance of different duties, but the same personal holiness is enjoined on all. External acts of virtue may be promoted by some circumstances, and impeded by others, but the graces of inward piety are of universal force, are of eternal obligation.

The universality of its requisitions is one of its most distinguishing characteristics. In the pagan world it seemed sufficient that a few exalted spirits, a few fine geniuses should soar to a vast superiority above the mass; but it was never expected that the mob of Rome or Athens, should aspire to any religious sentiments or feelings in common with Socrates or Epictetus. I say *religious* sentiments, because in matters of taste the distinctions were less striking, for the mob of Athens were competent critics in the dramatic art, while they were sunk in the most stupid and degrading idolatry. As to those of a higher class, while no subject in science, arts or learning was too lofty or too abstruse for their acquisition, no object in nature was too low, no conception of a depraved imagination was too impure for their worship. While the civil and political wisdom of the Romans was carried to such perfection that their code of laws has still a place in the most enlightened countries, their deplorably gross superstitions, rank them in point of religion with the savages of Africa. It shows how little a way that reason, which manifested itself with such unrivalled vigour in their poets, orators and historians, as to make them still models to ours, could go in what related to religion, when these polished people, in the objects of their worship, are only on a par with the inhabitants of Otaheite.

It furnishes the most incontrovertible proof that the world by wisdom knew not God, that it was at the very time, and in the very country, in which knowledge and taste has attained their utmost perfection, when the porch and the academy had given laws to human intellect, that atheism first assumed a shape, and established itself into a school of philosophy. It was at the moment when the mental powers were carried to the highest pitch in Greece, that it was settled as an infallible truth in this philosophy, that the *senses were the highest natural light of mankind.* It was in the most enlightened age of Rome that this atheistical philosophy was transplanted thither, and that one of her most elegant poets adopted it, and rendered popular by the bewitching graces of his verse.

It seems as if the most accomplished nations stood in the most pressing need of the light of Revelation; for it was not to the dark and stupid corners of the earth that the apostles had their earliest missions. One of St. Paul's first and noblest expositions of Christian truth was made before the most august deliberative assembly in the world, though, by the way, it does not appear that more than one member of the Areopagus was converted. In Rome, some of the apostle's earliest converts belonged to the imperial palace. It was to the metropolis of cultivated Italy, it was to the 'regions of Achaia,' to the opulent and luxurious city of Corinth, in preference to the barbarous countries of the uncivilized world, that some of his first epistles were addressed.

Even natural religion was little understood by those who professed it; it was full of obscurity till viewed by the clear light of the Gospel. Not only natural religion remained to be clearly comprehended, but reason itself remained to be carried to its highest pitch in the countries where Revelation is professed. Natural Religion could not see itself by its own light, Reason could not extricate itself from the labyrinth of error and ignorance in which false religion had involved the world. Grace has raised Nature. Revelation has given a lift to Reason, and taught her to despise the follies and corruptions which obscured her brightness. If nature is now delivered from darkness, it was the helping hand of Revelation which raised her from the rubbish in which she lay buried.

Christianity has not only given us right conceptions of God, of his holiness, of the way in which he will be worshipped; it has not only given us principles to promote our happiness here, and to insure it hereafter; but it has really taught us what a proud philosophy arrogates to itself, the right use of reason. It has given us those principles of examining and judging, by which we are enabled to determine on the absurdity of false religions. 'For to what else can it be ascribed,' says the sagacious bishop Sherlock, 'that in every nation that names the name of Christ, even reason and nature see and condemn the follies, to which others are still, for want of the same help, held in subjection?'

Allowing however that Plato and Antonius seemed to have been taught of heaven, yet the

object for which we contend is, that no provision was made for the vulgar. While a feint ray shone on the page of philosophy, the people were involved in darkness which might be felt. The million were left to live without knowledge, and to die without hope. For what knowledge or what hope would be acquired from the preposterous, though amusing, and in many respects elegant mythology, which they might pick up in their poets, the belief of which seemed to be confined to the populace.

But there was no common principle of hope or fear, of faith or practice; no motive of consolation, no bond of charity, no communion of everlasting interest, no reversionary equality between the wise and the ignorant, the master and the slave, the Greek and the barbarian.

A religion was wanted which should be of general application. Christianity happily accommodated itself to the common exigencies. It furnished an adequate supply to the universal want. Instead of perpetual but unexpiating sacrifices to appease imaginary deities,

Gods, such as guilt makes welcome,

it presents 'one oblation once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.' It presents one consistent scheme of morals growing out of one uniform system of doctrines; one perfect rule of practice, depending on one principle of faith; it offers grace to direct the one and to assist the other. It encircles the whole sphere of duty with the broad and golden zone of coalescing charity, stamped with the inscription 'a new commandment give I unto you, that you love one another.' Christianity instead of destroying the distinctions of rank, or breaking in on the regulations of society, by this universal precept, furnishes new fences to its order, additional security to its repose, and fresh strength to its subordinations.

Were this command, so inevitably productive of that peculiarly Christian injunction of 'doing to others as we would they should do unto us,' uniformly observed, the whole frame of society would be cemented and consolidated into one indissoluble bond of universal brotherhood. This divinely enacted law is the seminal principle of justice, charity, patience, forbearance, in short, of all social virtue. That it does not produce these excellent effects, is not owing to any defect in the principle, but in our corrupt nature, which so reluctantly, so imperfectly obeys it. If it were conscientiously adopted, and substantially acted upon, received in its very spirit, and obeyed from the ground of the heart, human laws might be abrogated, courts of justice abolished, and treaties of morality burnt; war would be no longer an art, nor military tactics a science. We should suffer long and be kind, and so far from 'seeking that which is another's.' we should not even 'seek our own.'

But let not the soldier or the lawyer be alarmed.—Their craft is in no danger. The world does not intend to act upon the divine principle which would injure their professions; and till this only revolution which good men desire actually takes place, our fortunes will not be secure without the exertions of the one, nor our lives without the protection of the other.

All the virtues have their appropriate place and rank in Scripture. They are introduced as individually, beautifully, and as reciprocally connected, like the graces in the mythologic dance. But perhaps no Christian grace ever sat to the hand of a more consummate master than Charity. Her incomparable painter, St. Paul, has drawn her at full length in all her fair proportions. Every attitude is full of grace, every lineament of beauty. The whole delineation is perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Who can look at this finished piece without blushing at his own want of likeness to it? Yet if this conscious dissimilitude induce a cordial desire of resemblance, the humiliation will be salutary. Perhaps a more frequent contemplation of this exquisite figure, accompanied with earnest endeavours for a growing resemblance, would gradually lead us, not barely to admire the portrait, but would at length assimilate us to the divine original.

CHAP. X.

Christian Holiness.

Christianity then, as we have attempted to show in the preceding chapter, exhibits no different standards of goodness applicable to different stations or characters. No one can be allowed to rest in a low degree, and plead his exemption for aiming no higher. No one can be secure in any state of piety below that state which would not have been enjoined on all, had not all been entitled to the means of attaining it.

Those who keep their pattern in their eye, though they may fail of the highest attainments, will not be satisfied with such as are low. The striking inferiority will excite compunction; compunction will stimulate them to press on, which those never do, who losing sight of their standard, are satisfied with the height they have reached

He is not likely to be the object of God's favour, who takes his determined stand on the very lowest step in the scale of perfection; who does not even aspire above it; whose aim seems to be, not so much to please God as to escape punishment. Many however will doubtless be accepted, though their progress has been small; their difficulties may have been great, their natural capacity weak, their temptation strong, and their instruction defective.

Revelation has not only furnished injunctions but motives to holiness; not only motives, but examples and authorities. 'Be ye therefore perfect' (according to your measure and degree,) 'as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' And what says the Old Testament? It accords with the New—'Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.'

This was the injunction of God himself, not given exclusively to Moses, to the leader and legislator, or to a few distinguished officers, or to a selection of eminent men, but to an immense body of people even to the whole assem-

bled host of Israel; to men of all ranks, professions, capacities, and characters, to the minister of religion, and to the uninstructed, to enlightened rulers, and to feeble women. 'God,' says an excellent writer,* 'had antecedently given to his people particular laws, suited to their several exigencies and various conditions; but the command to be holy was a general (might he not have said a universal) law.'

'Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?' This is perhaps the sublimest apostrophe of the praise (rendered more striking by its interrogatory form,) which the Scriptures have recorded. It makes a part of the first song of gratulation, which is to be found in the treasury of sacred poetry. The epithet of *holy* is more frequently affixed to the name of God than any other. His *mighty* name is less often invoked, than his *holy* name. To offend against this attribute is represented as more heinous than to oppose any other. It has been remarked that the impiety of the Assyrian monarch is not described by his hostility against the great, the Almighty God, but it is made an aggravation of his crime that he had committed it against *the Holy One of Israel.*

When God condescended to give a pledge for the performance of his promise, he swears by his *holiness*, as if it were the distinguishing quality which was more especially binding. It seems connected and interwoven with all the divine perfections. Which of his excellences can we contemplate as separated from this? Is not his justice stamped with sanctity! It is free from any tincture of vindictiveness, and is therefore a holy justice. His mercy has none of the partiality of favouritism, or capricious fondness of human kindness, but is a holy mercy. His holiness is not more the source of his mercies than of his punishments. If his holiness in his severities to us wanted a justification, there cannot be at once a more substantial and more splendid illustration of it than the noble passage already quoted, for he is called 'glorious in holiness' immediately after he had vindicated the honour of his name, by the miraculous destruction of the army of Pharaoh.

Is it not then a necessary consequence growing out of his perfections, 'that a righteous God loveth righteousness,' that he will of course require in his creatures a desire to imitate as well as to adore that attribute by which He himself loves to be distinguished? We cannot indeed, like God, be essentially holy. In an infinite being it is a substance, in a created being it is only an accident: God is the essence of holiness, but we can have no holiness, nor any other good thing, but what we derive from him—It is his prerogative, but our privilege.

If God loves holiness because it is his image, he must consequently hate sin because it defaces his image. If he glorifies his own mercy and goodness in rewarding virtue, he no less vindicates the honour of his holiness in the punishment of vice. A perfect God can no more approve of sin in his creatures than he can commit it himself. He may forgive sin on his own conditions, but there are no conditions on which he can be reconciled to it. The infinite goodness of God may delight in the beneficial purposes to which his infinite wisdom has made the sins of his creatures subservient, but sin itself will always be abhorrent to his nature. His wisdom may turn it to a merciful end, but his indignation at the offence cannot be diminished. He loves man, for he cannot but love his own work; he hates sin, for that was man's own invention, and no part of the work which God had made. Even in the imperfect administration of human laws impunity of crimes would be construed into approbation of them.*

The law of holiness then, is a law binding on all persons without distinction, not limited to the period nor to the people to whom it was given. It reaches through the whole Jewish dispensation, and extends with wider demands and higher sanctions to every Christian, of every denomination, of every age, and every country.

A more sublime motive cannot be assigned why we should be holy, than because 'the Lord our God is holy.' Men of the world have no objection to the terms virtue, morality, integrity, rectitude; but they associate something overacted, not to say hypocritical, with the term holiness, and neither use it in a good sense when applied to others, nor would wish to have it applied to themselves; but make it over, with a little suspicion, and not a little derision, to puritans and enthusiasts.

This suspected epithet, however, is surely rescued from every injurious association, if we consider it as the chosen attribute of the Most High. We do not presume to apply the terms virtue, probity, morality, to God; but we ascribe holiness to him because he first ascribed it to himself as the aggregate and consummation of all his perfections.

Shall so imperfect a being as man then, ridicule the application of this term to others, or be ashamed of it himself? There is a cause indeed which should make him ashamed of the appropriation; that of not deserving it. This comprehensive appellation includes all the Christian graces; all the virtues in their just proportion, order, and harmony; in all their bearings, relations, and dependences. And as in God glory and holiness are united, so the apostle combines 'sanctification and honour' as the glory of man.

Traces more or less of the holiness of God may be found in his works, to those who view them with the eye of faith. They are more plainly visible in his providences; but it is in his word that we must chiefly look for the manifestations of his holiness. He is every where described as perfectly holy in himself, as a model to be imitated by his creatures, and, though with an interval immeasurable, as imitable by them.

The great doctrine of redemption is inseparably connected with the doctrine of sanctification. As an admirable writer has observed, 'If the blood of Christ reconcile us to the justice of God, the Spirit of Christ is to reconcile us to the

* Saurin.

* See Charnock on the Attributes.

holiness of God.'—When we are told therefore that Christ is made unto us 'righteousness,' we are in the same place taught that he is made unto us sanctification; that is, he is both justifier and sanctifier. In vain shall we deceive ourselves by resting on his sacrifice, while we neglect to imitate his example.

The glorious spirits which surrounded the throne of God are not represented as singing hallelujahs to his omnipotence, nor even to his mercy, but to that attribute which, as with a glory, encircles all the rest. They perpetually cry, holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts; and it is observable, that the angels which adore him for his holiness are the ministers of his justice. Those pure intelligences perceive, no doubt, that this union of attributes constitutes the divine perfection.

This infinitely blessed Being then, to whom angels and archangels, and all the hosts of heaven are continually ascribing holiness, has commanded us to be holy. To be holy because God is holy, is both an argument and a command. An argument founded on the perfections of God, and a command to imitate him. This command is given to creatures, fallen indeed, but to whom God graciously promises strength for the imitation. If in God holiness implies an aggregate of perfections; in man, even in his low degree, it is an incorporation of the Christian graces.

The holiness of God indeed is confined by no limitation; ours is bounded, finite, imperfect. Yet let us be sedulous to extend our little sphere. Let our desires be large, though our capacities are contracted. Let our aims be lofty, though our attainments are low. Let us be solicitous that no day pass without some augmentation of our holiness, some added height in our aspirations, some wider expansion in the compass of our virtues. Let us strive every day for some superiority to the preceding day; something that shall distinctly mark the passing scene with progress; something that shall inspire an humble hope that we are rather less unfit for heaven to-day than we were yesterday.

The celebrated artist who has recorded that he passed no day without drawing a line, drew it, not for repetition, but for progress; not to produce a given number of strokes, but to forward his work, to complete his design. The Christian, like the painter, does not draw his lines at random; he has a model to imitate, as well as an outline to fill Every touch conforms him more and more to the great original. He who has transfused most of the life of God into his soul, has copied it most successfully.

'To *seek* happiness,' says one of the fathers, 'is to desire God, and to find him *is* that happiness.' Our very happiness therefore is not our independent property; it flows from that eternal mind which is the source and sum of happiness. In vain we look for felicity in all around us. It can only be found in that original fountain, whence we, and all we are and have, are derived.—Where then is the imaginary wise man of the school of Zeno? what is the perfection of virtue supposed by Aristotle? They have no existence but in the romance of philosophy. Happiness must be imperfect in an imperfect state. Religion, it is true, is initial happiness, and points to its perfection: but as the best men possess it but imperfectly, they cannot be perfectly happy. Nothing can confer completeness which is itself incomplete. 'With Thee, O Lord, is the fountain of life, and in Thy light only we shall see light.'*

Whatever shall still remain wanting in our attainments, and much will still remain, let this last, greatest, highest consideration stimulate our languid exertions, that God has negatively promised the beatific vision, the enjoyment of his presence, to this attainment, by specifically proclaiming, that without holiness no man shall see his face. To know God is the rudiments of that eternal life which will hereafter be perfected by seeing him. As there is no stronger reason why we must not look for perfect happiness in this life, than because there is no perfect holiness, so the nearer advances we make to the one, the greater progress we shall make towards the other; we must cultivate here those tendencies and tempers which must be carried to perfection in a happier clime.—But as holiness is the concomitant of happiness, so must it be its precursor. As sin has destroyed our happiness, so sin must be destroyed before our happiness can be restored. Our nature must be renovated before our felicity can be established. This is according to the nature of things, as well as agreeable to the law and will of God. Let us then carefully look to the subduing in our inmost hearts all those dispositions that are unlike God; all those actions, thoughts, and tendencies that are contrary to God.

Independently therefore of all the other motives to holiness which religion suggests, independently of the fear of punishment; independently even of the hope of glory, let us be holy from this ennobling, elevating motive, because the Lord our God is holy. And when our virtue flags, let it be renovated by this imperative injunction, backed by this irresistible argument. The motive for imitation, and the Being to be imitated, seem almost to identify us with infinity. It is a connexion which endears, an assimilation which dignifies, a resemblance which elevates. The apostle has added to the prophet an assurance which makes the crown and consummation of the promise, 'that though we know not yet what we shall be, yet we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.'

In what a beautiful variety of glowing expressions, and admiring strains, do the Scripture worthies delight to represent God; not only in relation to what he is to them, but to the supreme excellence of his own transcendent perfections! They expatiate, they amplify, they dwell with unwearied iteration on the adorable theme: they ransack language, they exhaust all the expressions of praise, and wonder, and admiration; all the images of astonishment and delight, to laud and magnify his glorious name. They praise him, they bless him, they worship him, they glorify him, they give thanks to him for his great glory, saying 'Holy, holy, holy,

* See Leighton on Happiness.

Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory.'

They glorify him relatively to themselves 'I will magnify Thee, O Lord my strength—My help cometh of God—The Lord himself is the portion of my inheritance.' At another time soaring with a noble disinterestedness, and quite losing sight of self and all created glories, they adore *him* for his own incommunicable excellences. 'Be thou exalted, O God, in thine own strength.'—'Oh the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.' Then bursting to a rapture of adoration, and burning with a more intense flame, they cluster his attributes—'To the King eternal, immortal, invisible, be honour and glory for ever and ever.' *One* is lost in admiration of his wisdom—his ascription is 'to the only *wise* God.' *Another* in triumphant strains overflows with transport at the consideration of the attribute on which we have been descanting: 'O Lord, who is like unto Thee, there is none holy as the Lord.'—'Sing praises unto the Lord, oh ye saints of his, and give thanks unto him for a remembrance of his holiness.'

The prophets and apostles were not deterred from pouring out the overflowings of their fervent spirits, they were not restrained from celebrating the perfections of their Creator, through the cold-hearted fear of being reckoned enthusiasts. The saints of old were not prevented from breathing out their rapturous hosannahs to the King of Saints, through the coward dread of being branded as fanatical. The conceptions of their minds dilating with the view of the glorious constellation of the Divine attributes; and the affections of their hearts warming with the thought, that those attributes were all concentrated in mercy—they display a sublime oblivion of themselves—they forget every thing but God. Their own wants dwindled to a point. Their own concerns, nay the universe itself, shrinks into nothing. They seem absorbed in the effulgence of Deity, lost in the radiant beams of infinite glory.

CHAP. XI.

On the comparatively small faults and virtues.

The 'Fishers of men, as if exclusively bent on catching the greater sinners, often make the interstices of the moral net so wide, that it cannot retain those of more ordinary size, which every where abound. Their draught might be more abundant, were not the meshes so large that the smaller sort, aided by their own lubricity, escape the toils and slip through. Happy to find themselves not bulky enough to be entangled, they plunge back again into their native element, enjoy their escape, and hope they may safely wait to grow bigger before they are in danger of being caught.

It is of more importance than we are aware, or are willing to allow, that we take care diligently to practice the smaller virtues, avoid scrupulously the lesser sins, and bear patiently inferior trials; for the sin of habitually yielding, or the grace of habitually resisting in comparatively small points, tends in no inconsiderable degree to produce that vigour or that debility of mind on which hangs victory or defeat.

Conscience is moral sensation. It is the hasty perception of good and evil, the peremptory decision of the mind to adopt the one or avoid the other. Providence has furnished the body with senses, and the soul with conscience, as a *tact* by which to shrink from the approach of danger; as a prompt feeling to supply the deductions of reasoning; as a spontaneous impulse to precede a train of reflections for which the suddenness and surprise of the attack allow no time. An enlightened conscience if kept tenderly alive by a continual attention to its admonitions, would especially preserve us from those smaller sins, and stimulate us to those lesser duties which we are falsely apt to think are too insignificant to be brought to the bar of religion, too trivial to be weighed by the standard of Scripture.

By cherishing this quick feeling of rectitude, light and sudden as the flash from heaven, and which is in fact the motion of the spirit, we intuitively reject what is wrong before we have time to examine why it is wrong, and seize on what is right before we have time to examine why it is right. Should we not then be careful how we extinguish this sacred spark? Will any thing be more likely to extinguish it than to neglect its hourly momentoes to perform the smaller duties, and to avoid the lesser faults, which, as they in a good measure make up the sum of human life, will naturally fix and determine our character, that creature of habits? Will not our neglect or observance of it, incline or indispose us for those more important duties of which these smaller ones are connecting links?

The vices derive their existence from wildness, confusion, disorganization. The discord of the passions is owing to their having different views, conflicting aims, and opposite ends. The rebellious vices have no common head; each is all to itself. They promote their own operations by disturbing those of others, but in disturbing they do not destroy them. Though they are all of one family, they live on no friendly terms. Profligacy hates covetousness as much as if it were a virtue. The life of every sin is a life of conflict, which occasions the torment, but not the death of its opposite. Like the fabled brood of the serpent, the passions spring up, armed against each other, but they fail to complete the resemblance, for they do not effect their mutual destruction.

But without union the Christian graces could not be perfected, and the smaller virtues are the threads and filaments which gently but firmly tie them together. There is an attractive power in goodness which draws each part to the other. This concord of the virtues is derived from their having one common centre in which all meet. In vice there is a strong repulsion. Though bad men seek each other, they do not love each other. Each seeks the other in order to promote his own purposes, while he hates him by whom his purposes are promoted.

The lesser qualities of the human character

are like the lower people in a country; they are numerically, if not individually important. If well regulated they become valuable from that very circumstance of numbers, which, under a negligent administration, renders them formidable. The peace of the individual mind and of the nation, is materially affected by the discipline in which those inferior orders are maintained. Laxity and neglect in both cases are subversive of all good government.

But if we may be allowed to glance from earth to heaven, perhaps the beauty of the lesser virtues may be still better illustrated by that long and luminous track made up of minute and almost imperceptible stars, which though separately too inconsiderable to attract attention, yet from their number and confluence, form that soft and shining stream of light every where discernable, and which always corresponds to the same fixed stars, as the smaller virtues do to their concomitant great ones.—Without pursuing the metaphor to the classic fiction that the Galaxy was the road through which the ancient heroes went to heaven, may we not venture to say that Christians will make their way thither more pleasant by the consistent practice of the minuter virtues?

Every Christian should consider religion as a fort which he is called to defend. The meanest soldier in the army if he add patriotism to valour, will fight as earnestly as if the glory of the contest depended on his single arm. But he brings his watchfulness as well as his courage into action. He strenuously defends every pass he is appointed to guard, without inquiring whether it be great or small. There is not any defect in religion or morals so little as to be of no consequence. Worldly things may be little because their aim and end may be little. Things are great or small, not according to their ostensible importance, but according to the magnitude of their object, and the importance of their consequences.

The acquisition of even the smallest virtue being, as has been before observed, an actual conquest over the opposite vice, doubles our moral strength. The spiritual enemy has one object less, and the conqueror one virtue more.

By allowed negligence in small things, we are not aware how much we injure religion in the eye of the world. How can we expect people to believe that we are in earnest in great points, when they see that we cannot withstand a trivial temptation, against which resistance would have been comparatively easy? At a distance they hear with respect our general characters. They become domesticated with us, and discover the same failings, littleness, and bad tempers, as they have been accustomed to meet with in the most ordinary persons.

If Milton, in one of his letters to a learned foreigner who had visited him, could congratulate himself on the consciousness that in that visit he had been found equal to his reputation, and had supported in private conversation his high character as an author; shall not the Christian be equally anxious to support the credit of holy profession, by not betraying in familiar life any temper inconsistent with religion?

It is not difficult to attract respect on great occasions, where we are kept in order by knowing that the public eye is fixed upon us. It is easy to maintain a regard to our dignity in a 'Symposiack, or an academical dinner;' but to labour to maintain it in the recesses of domestic privacy requires more watchfulness, and is no less the duty, than it will be the habitual practice, of the consistent Christian.

Our neglect of inferior duties is particularly injurious to the mind of our dependants and servants. If they see us 'weak and infirm of purpose,' peevish, irresolute, capricious, passionate, or inconsistent, in our daily conduct, which comes under their immediate observation, and which comes also within their power of judging, they will not give us credit for those higher qualities which we may possess, and those superior duties which we may be more careful to fulfil. Neither their capacity nor their opportunities, may enable them to judge of the orthodoxy of the head; but there will be obvious and decisive proofs to the meanest capacity, of the state and temper of the heart. Our greater qualities will do them little good, while our lesser but incessant faults do them much injury. Seeing us so defective in the daily course of domestic conduct, though they will obey us because they are obliged to it, they will neither love nor esteem us enough to be influenced by our advice, nor to be governed by our instructions, on those great points which every conscientious head of a family will be careful to inculcate on all about him. It demands no less circumspection to be a *Christian* than to be a '*hero*, to one's valet de chambre.'

In all that relates to God and to himself the Christian knows of no small faults. He considers all allowed and wilful sins, whatever be their magnitude, as an offence against his Maker. Nothing that offends him can be insignificant. Nothing that contributes to fasten on ourselves a wrong habit can be trifling. Faults which we are accustomed to consider as small are repeated without compunction. The habit of committing them is confirmed by the repetition. Frequency renders us at first indifferent, then insensible. The hopelessness attending a long indulged custom generates carelessness, till for want of exercise the power of resistance is first weakened, then destroyed.

But there is a still more serious point of view in which the subject may be considered. Do small faults, continually repeated, always retain their original diminutiveness? Is any axiom more established than that all evil is of a progressive nature? Is a bad temper which is never repressed, no worse after years of indulgence, than when we at first gave the reins to it? Does that which we first allowed ourselves under the name of harmless levity on serious subjects, never proceed to profaneness? Does what was once admired as proper spirit, never grow into pride, never swell into insolence? Does the habit of incorrect narrative, or loose talking, or allowed hyperbole, never lead to falsehood; never settle in deceit? Before we positively determine that small faults are innocent, we must undertake to prove that they shall never outgrow their primitive dimensions; we

must ascertain that the infant shall never become a giant.

Procrastination is reckoned among the most venial of our faults, and sits so lightly on our minds that we scarcely apologize for it. But who can assure us, that had not the assistance we had resolved to give to one friend under distress, or the advice to another under temptation, to-day, been delayed, and from mere sloth and indolence been put off till to-morrow, it might not have preserved the fortunes of the one, or saved the soul of the other?

It is not enough that we perform duties; we must perform them at the right time.—We must do the duty of every day in its own season. Every day has its own imperious duties; we must not depend upon to-day for fulfilling those which we neglected yesterday, for to-day might not have been granted us. To-morrow will be equally peremptory in its demands; and the succeeding day, if we live to see it, will be ready with its proper claims.

Indecision, though it is not so often caused by reflection as by the want of it, yet may be as mischievous; for if we spend too much time in balancing probabilities, the period for action is lost. While we are ruminating on difficulties which may never occur, reconciling differences which perhaps do not exist, and poising in opposite scales things of nearly the same weight, the opportunity is lost of producing that good which a firm and manly decision would have effected.

Idleness, though itself 'the most unperforming of all the vices,' is however the pass through which they all enter, the stage on which they all act. Though supremely passive itself, it lends a willing hand to all evil, practical as well as speculative. It is the abettor of every sin whoever commits it, the receiver of all booty, whoever is the thief. If it does nothing itself, it connives at all the mischief that is done by others.

Vanity is exceedingly misplaced when ranked as she commonly is, in the catalogue of small faults. It is under her character of harmlessness that she does all her mischief. She is indeed often found in the society of great virtues. She does not follow in the train, but mixes herself with the company, and by mixing mars it. The use our spiritual enemy makes of her is a master stroke. When he cannot prevent us from doing right actions, he can accomplish his purpose almost as well 'by making us vain of them.' When he cannot deprive the public of our benevolence, he can defeat the effect to ourselves by poisoning the principle. When he cannot rob others of the good effect of the deed, he can gain his point by robbing the doer of his reward.

Peevishness is another of the minor miseries. Human life, though sufficiently unhappy, cannot contrive to furnish misfortunes so often as the passionate and the peevish can supply impatience. To commit our reason and temper to the mercy of every acquaintance, and of every servant, is not making the wisest use of them. If we recollect that violence and peevishness are the common resource of those whose knowledge is small, and whose arguments are weak, our very pride might lead us to subdue our passion, if we had not a better principle to resort to. Anger is the common refuge of insignificance. People who feel their character to be slight, hope to give it weight by inflation: but the blown bladder at its fullest distention is still empty. Sluggish characters, above all, have no right to be passionate. They should be contented with their own congenial faults. Dullness however has its impetuosities and its fluctuations as well as genius. It is on the coast of heavy Bœotia that the Euripus exhibits its unparalleled restlessness and agitation.

Trifling is ranked among the venial faults. But if time be one grand talent given us in order to our securing eternal life; if we trifle away that time so as to lose that eternal life, on which by not trifling we might have laid hold, then will it answer the end of sin. A life devoted to trifles not only takes away the inclination, but the capacity for higher pursuits. The truths of Christianity have scarcely more influence on a frivolous than on a profligate character. If the mind be so absorbed, not merely with what is vicious, but with what is useless, as to be thoroughly disinclined to the activities of a life of piety, it matters little what the cause is which so disinclines it. If these habits cannot be accused of great moral evil, yet it argues a low state of mind; that a being who has an eternity at stake can abandon itself to trivial pursuits. If the great concern of life cannot be secured without habitual watchfulness, how is it to be secured by habitual carelessness? It will afford little comfort to the trifler, when at the last reckoning he gives in his long negative catalogue, that the more ostensible offender was worse employed. The trifler will not be weighed in the scale with the profligate, but in the balance of the sanctuary.

Some men make for themselves a sort of code of the lesser morals, of which they settle both the laws and the chronology. They fix 'the climacterics of the mind;'* determine at what period such a vice may be adopted without discredit, at what age one bad habit may give way to another more in character. Having settled it as a matter of course, that to a certain age certain faults are natural, they proceed to act as if they thought them necessary.

But let us not practice on ourselves the gross imposition to believe that any failing, much less any vice, is necessarily appended to any state or any age, or that it is irresistible at any. We may accustom ourselves to talk of vanity and extravagance as belonging to the young; and avarice and peevishness to the old, till the next step will be that we shall think ourselves justified in adopting them. Whoever is eager to find excuses for vice and folly, will feel his own backwardness to practise them much diminished.

C' est le premier pas qui coute. It is only to make out an imaginary necessity, and then we easily fall into the necessity we have imagined. Providence has established no such association. There is, it is true, more danger of certain faults under certain circumstances; and some temptations are stronger at some periods: but it is a

* Dr. Johnson.

proof that they are not irresistible because *all* do not fall into them. The evil is in ourselves, who mitigate the discredit by the supposed necessity. The prediction, like the dream of the astrologer, creates the event instead of foretelling it. But there is no supposition can be made of a bad case which will justify the making it our own: Nor will general positions ever serve for individual apologies.—Who has not known persons who, though they retain the sound health and vigour of active life, sink prematurely into sloth and inactivity, solely on the ground that these dispositions are fancied to be unavoidably incident to advancing years. They demand the indulgence before they feel the infirmity. Indolence thus forges a dismission from duty before the discharge is issued out by Providence. No.—Let us endeavour to meet the evils of the several conditions and periods of life with submission, but it is an offence to their divine dispenser to forestall them.

But we have still a saving clause for ourselves, whether the evil be of greater or lesser magnitude. If the fault be great, we lament the inability to resist it; if small, we deny the importance of so doing, we plead that we cannot withstand a great temptation, and that a small one is not worth withstanding. But if the temptation or the fault be great, we should resist it on account of that very magnitude; if small, the giving it up can cost but little; and the conscientious habit of conquering the less will confer considerable strength towards subduing the greater.

There is again, a sort of splendid character, which, winding itself up occasionally to certain shining actions, thinks itself fully justified in breaking loose from the shackles of restraint in smaller things: it makes no scruple to indemnify itself for these popular deeds by indulgences which, though allowed, are far from innocent. It thus secures to itself praise and popularity by what is sure to gain it, and immunity from censure in indulging the favourite fault, practically exclaiming, 'Is it not a little one?'

Vanity is at the bottom of almost all, may we not say, of all our sins? We think more of signalizing than of saving ourselves. We overlook the hourly occasions which occur of serving, of obliging, of comforting those around us, while we sometimes, not unwillingly perform an act of notorious generosity. The habit, however, in the former case, better indicates the disposition and bent of the mind, than the solitary act of splendor. The apostle does not say whatsoever *great* things ye do, but 'whatsoever things ye do, do *all* to the glory of God.' Actions are less weighed by their bulk than their motive. Virtues are less measured by their splendor than their principle. The racer proceeds in his course more effectually by a steady unslackened pace, than by starts of violent but unequal exertion.

That great abstract of moral law, of which we have elsewhere spoken,* that rule of the highest court of appeal, set up in his own bosom, to which every man can always resort, 'all things that ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also unto them:'—This law, if faithfully obeyed, operating as an infallible remedy for all the disorders of sel -love, would, by throwing its partiality into the right scale, establish the right exercise of all the smaller virtues. Its strict observance would not only put a stop to all injustice, but to all unkindness: not only to oppressive acts, but to unfeeling language. Even haughty looks and supercilious gestures would be banished from the face of society, did we ask ourselves how we should like to receive what we are not ashamed to give.

Till we thus morally transmute place, person, and circumstance with those of our brother, we shall never treat him with the tenderness this gracious law enjoins. Small virtues and small offences are only so by comparison. To treat a fellow-creature with harsh language, is not indeed a crime like robbing him of his estate or destroying his reputation. They are, however, all the offspring of the same family.—They are the same in quality though not in degree. All flow, though in streams of different magnitude, from the same fountain; all are indications of a departure from that principle which is included in the law of love. The consequences they involve are not less certain; though they are less important.

The reason why what are called religious people often differ so little from others in small trials is, that instead of bringing religion to their aid in their lesser vexations, they either leave the disturbance to prey upon their minds, or apply to false reliefs for its removal. Those who are rendered unhappy by frivolous troubles, seek comfort in frivolous enjoyments. But we should apply the same remedy to ordinary trials, as to great ones; for as small disquietudes spring from the same cause as great trials, namely, the uncertain and imperfect condition of human life, so they require the same remedy. Meeting common cares with a right spirit would impart a smoothness to the temper, a spirit of cheerfulness to the heart, which would mightily break the force of heavier trials.

You apply to the power of religion in great evils.—Why does it not occur to you to apply to it in the less? Is it that you think the instrument greater than the occasion demands? It is not too great if the lesser one will not produce the effect, or if it produce it in the wrong way; for there is such a thing as putting an evil out of sight without curing it. You would apply to religion on the loss of your child—apply to it on the loss of your temper. Throw in this wholesome tree to sweeten the bitter waters. As no calamity is too great for the power of Christianity to mitigate, so none is too small to experience its beneficial results. Our behaviour under the ordinary accidents of life forms a characteristic distinction between different classes of Christians. The least advanced, resort to religion on great occasions; the deeper proficient resorts to it on all. What makes it appear of so little comparative value is, that the medicine prepared by the Great Physician is thrown by instead of being taken. The patient thinks not of it but in extreme cases. A remedy, however potent, not applied, can produce no effect. But he who has adopted one fixed principle for the

* Chapter ix.

government of his life, will try to keep it in perpetual exercise. An acquaintance with the nature of human evils and of their remedy, would check that spirit of complaint which so much abounds, and which often makes so little difference between people professing religion and those who profess it not.

If the duties in question are not great they become important by the constant demand that is made for them. They have been called 'the small coin of human life,' and on their perpetual and unobstructed circulation depends much of the comfort, as well as convenience of its transactions. They make up in frequency what they want in magnitude. How few of us are called to carry the doctrines of Christianity into distant lands! But which of us is not called every day to adorn those doctrines, by gentleness in our own carriage, by kindness and forbearance to all about us?

In performing the unostensible duties, there is no incentive from vanity. No love of fame inspires that virtue, of which fame will never hear. There can be but one motive, and that the purest, for the exercise of virtues, the report of which will never reach beyond the little circle whose happiness they promote. They do not fill the world with our renown, but they fill our own family with comfort, and if they have the love of God for their principle, they will have his favour for their reward.

In this enumeration of faults, we include not sins of infirmity, inadvertency, and surprise, to which even the most sincere Christians are but too liable. What are here adverted to are allowed, habitual, and unresisted faults: Habitual, because unresisted, and allowed from the notion that they are too inconsiderable to call for resistance. Faults into which we are betrayed through surprise and inadvertency, though that is no reason for committing them, may not be without their uses; they renew the salutary conviction of our sinful nature, make us little in our own eyes, increase our sense of dependence, promote watchfulness, deepen humility, and quicken repentance.

We must however be careful not to entangle the conscience or embarrass the spirit by groundless apprehensions. We have a merciful Father, not a hard master to deal with. We must not harass our minds with a suspicious dread, as if by a needless rigour the Almighty were laying snares to entrap us, nor be terrified with imaginary fears, as if he were on the watch to punish every casual error!—To be immutable and impeccable belongs not to humanity. He, who made us, best knows of what we are made. Our compassionate High Priest will bear with much infirmity, will pardon much involuntary weakness.

But knowing, as every man must know, who looks into his own heart, the difficulties he has from the intervention of his evil tempers, in serving God faithfully, and still however earnestly desirous of serving him, is it not to be lamented that he is not more solicitous to remove his hindrances by trying to avoid those inferior sins, and resisting those lesser temptations, and practising those smaller virtues, the neglect of which obstructs his way, and keeps him back in the performance of higher duties. Instead of little renunciations being grievous, and petty self-denials a hardship, they in reality soften grievances, diminish hardships. They are the private drill which trains for public service.

If, as we have repeatedly observed, the principle is the test of the action, we are hourly furnished with occasions of showing our piety by the spirit in which the quiet unobserved actions of life are performed. The sacrifices may be too little to be observed, except by Him to whom they are offered. But small solicitudes, and demonstrations of attachment, scarcely perceptible to any eye but his for whom they were made, bear the true character of love to God, as they are the infallible marks of affection to our fellow creatures.

By enjoining small duties, the spirit of which is every where implied in the gospel, God, as it were, seems contriving to render the great ones easy to us. He makes the light yoke of Christ still lighter, not by abridging duty, but by increasing its facility through its familiarity. These little habits at once indicate the sentiment of the soul and improve it.

It is an awful consideration and one which every Christian should bring home to his own bosom, whether small faults wilfully persisted in, may not in time, not only dim the light of conscience, but extinguish the Spirit of grace; whether the power of resistance against great sins may not be finally withdrawn as a just punishment for having neglected to exert it against small ones.

Let us endeavour to maintain in our minds the awful impression that perhaps among the first objects which may meet our eyes when we open them on the eternal world, may be that tremendous book, in which, together with our great and actual sins, may be recorded in no less prominent characters, the ample page of omissions, of neglected opportunities, and even of fruitless good intentions, of which indolence, indecision, thoughtlessness, vanity, trifling, and procrastination concurred to frustrate the execution.

CHAP. XII.

Self-Examination.

In this stage of general inquiry, every kind of ignorance is esteemed dishonourable. In almost every sort of knowledge there is a competition for superiority. Intellectual attainments are never to be undervalued. Learning is the best human thing. All knowledge is excellent as far as it goes, and as long as it lasts. But how short is the period before 'tongues shall cease, and knowledge shall vanish away!'

Shall we then esteem it dishonourable to be ignorant in any thing which relates to life and literature, to taste and science, and not feel ashamed to live in ignorance of our own hearts?

To have a flourishing estate and a mind in disorder; to keep exact accounts with a steward and no reckoning with our Maker; to have an accurate knowledge of loss or gain in our busi

ness, and to remain utterly ignorant whether our spiritual concerns are improving or declining; to be cautious in ascertaining at the end of every year, how much we have increased or diminished our fortune, and to be careless whether we have incurred profit or loss in faith and holiness, is a wretched miscalculation of the comparative value of things. To bestow our attention on objects in an inverse proportion to their importance, is surely no proof that our learning has improved our judgment.

That deep thinker and acute reasoner, Dr. Barrow, has remarked that 'it is a peculiar excellency of human nature, and which distinguishes man from the inferior creatures more than bare reason itself, that he can reflect upon all that is done within him, can discern the tendencies of his soul, and is acquainted with his own purposes.'

This distinguishing faculty of self-inspection would not have been conferred on man, if it had not been intended that it should be in habitual operation. It is surely, as we before observed, as much a common law of prudence, to look well to our spiritual as to our worldly possessions. We have appetites to control, imaginations to restrain, tempers to regulate, passions to subdue; and how can this internal work be effected, how can our thoughts be kept within due bounds, how can a proper bias be given to the affections, how can 'the little state of man' be preserved from continual insurrection, how can this restraining power be maintained if this capacity of discerning, if this faculty of inspecting be not kept in regular exercise? Without constant discipline, imagination will become an outlaw, conscience an attainted rebel.

This inward eye, this power of introversion, is given us for a continual watch upon the soul. On an unremitted vigilance over its interior motions, those fruitful seeds of action, those prolific principles of vice and virtue, will depend both the formation and the growth of our moral and religious character. A superficial glance is not enough for a thing so deep, an unsteady view will not suffice for a thing so wavering, nor a casual look for a thing so deceitful as the human heart. A partial inspection on any one side, will not be enough for an object which must be observed under a variety of aspects, because it is always shifting its positions, always changing its appearances.

We should examine not only our conduct but our opinions; not only our faults but our prejudices; not only our propensities but our judgments. Our actions themselves will be obvious enough; it is our intentions which require the scrutiny. These we should follow up to their remotest springs, scrutinize to their deepest recesses, trace through their most perplexing windings. And lest we should, in our pursuit, wander in uncertainty and blindness, let us make use of that guiding clue which the Almighty has furnished by his word and by his Spirit, for conducting us through the intricacies of this labyrinth. 'What I know not, teach thou me,' should be our constant petition in all our researches.

Did we turn our thoughts inward, it would abate much of the self-complacency with which we swallow the flattery of others. Flattery hurts not him who flatters not himself. If we examined our motives keenly, we should frequently blush at the praises our actions receive. Let us then conscientiously inquire not only what we do, but whence and why we do it, from what motive and to what end.

Self-inspection is the only means to preserve us from self-conceit. We could not surely so very extravagantly value a being whom we ourselves should not only see, but feel to be so full of faults. Self-acquaintance will give us a far more deep and intimate knowledge of our own errors than we can possibly have, with all the inquisitiveness of an idle curiosity, of the errors of others. We are eager enough to blame them without knowing their motives. We are no less eager to vindicate ourselves, though we cannot be entirely ignorant of our own. Thus two virtues will be acquired by the same act, humility and candour; an impartial review of our own infirmities, being the likeliest way to make us tender and compassionate to those of others.

Nor shall we be liable so to overrate our own judgment when we perceive that it often forms such false estimates, is so captivated with trifles, so elated with petty successes, so dejected with little disappointments. When we hear others commend our charity which we know is so cold; when others extol our piety which we feel to be so dead; when they applaud the energies of our faith, which we must know to be so faint and feeble, we cannot possibly be so intoxicated with the applause which never would have been given, had the applauder known us as we know, or ought to know ourselves. If we contradict him, it may be only to draw on ourselves the imputation of a fresh virtue, humility, which perhaps we as little deserve to have ascribed to us as that which we have been renouncing. If we keep a sharp look out, we should not be proud of praises which cannot apply to us, but should rather grieve at the involuntary fraud of imposing on others, by tacitly accepting a character to which we have so little real pretension. To be delighted at finding that people think so much better of us than we are conscious of deserving, is in effect to rejoice in the success of our own deceit.

We shall also become more patient, more forbearing and forgiving, shall better endure the harsh judgment of others respecting us, when we perceive that their opinion of us nearly coincides with our own real though unacknowledged sentiments. There is much less injury incurred by others thinking too ill of us, than in our thinking to well of ourselves.

It is evident then, that to live at random, is not the life of a rational, much less of an immortal, least of all, of an accountable being. To pray occasionally, without deliberate course of prayer; to be generous without proportioning our means to our expenditure; to be liberal without a principle; to let the mind float on the current of public opinion; lie at the mercy of events, for the probable occurrence of which we have made no provision; to be every hour liable to death without any habitual preparation for it; to carry within us a principle which we believe will exist through all the countless ages

of eternity, and yet to make little inquiry whether that eternity is likely to be happy or miserable—all this is an inconsiderateness which, if adopted in the ordinary concerns of life, would bid fair to ruin a man's reputation for common sense: yet of this infatuation he who dives without self-examination is absolutely guilty.

Nothing more plainly shows us what weak vacillating creatures we are, than the difficulty we find in fixing ourselves down to the very self-scrutiny we had deliberately resolved on. Like the worthless Roman emperor we retire to our closet under the appearance of serious occupation, but might now and then be surprised, if not in catching flies, yet in pursuits nearly as contemptible. Some trifle which we should be ashamed to dwell upon at any time, intrudes itself on the moments dedicated to serious thought; recollection is interrupted; the whole chain of reflection broken, so that the scattered links cannot again be united. And so inconsistent are we that we are sometimes not sorry to have a plausible pretence for interrupting the very employment in which we had just before made it a duty to engage. For want of this home acquaintance, we remain in utter ignorance of our inability to meet even in ordinary trials of life with cheerfulness; indeed by this neglect we confirm that inability. Nursed in the lap of luxury, we have an indefinite notion that we have but a loose hold on the things of this world, and of the world itself. But let some accident take away, not the world, but some trifle on which we thought we set no value while we possessed it, and we find to our astonishment that we hold, not the world only, but even this trivial possession with a pretty tight grasp.—Such detections of our self-ignorance, if they do not serve to wean, ought at least to humble us.

There is a spurious sort of self-examination which does not serve to enlighten but to blind. A person who has left off some notorious vice, who has softened some shades of a glaring sin, or substituted some outward forms in the place of open irreligion, looks on this change of character with pleasure.—He compares himself with what he was, and views the alteration with self-complacency. He deceives himself by taking his standard from his former conduct, or from the character of still worse men, instead of taking it from the unerring rule of Scripture. He looks rather at the discredit than the sinfulness of his former life, and being more ashamed of what is disreputable than grieved at what is vicious, he is, in this state of shallow reformation, more in danger in proportion as he is more in credit. He is not aware that it is not having a fault or two less that will carry him to heaven, while his heart is still glued to the world and estranged from God.

If we ever look into our hearts at all, we are naturally most inclined to it when we think we have been acting right. Here inspection gratifies self-love. We have no great difficulty in directing our attention to an object, when that object persents us with pleasing images. But it is a painful effort to compel the mind to turn in on itself, when the view only presents subjects for regret and remorse. This painful duty however must be performed, and will be more salutary in proportion as it is less pleasant.—Let us establish it into a habit to ruminate on our faults. With the recollection of our virtues we need not feed our vanity. They will, if that vanity does not obliterate them, be recorded elsewhere.

We are almost disposed to look at those parts of our character which will best bear it, and which consequently least need it: at those parts which afford most self-gratulation. If a covetous man, for instance, examines himself, instead of turning his attention to the peccant part, he applies the probe where he knows it will not go very deep; he turns from his avarice to that sobriety of which his very avarice is perhaps the source. Another, who is the slave of passion, fondly rests upon some act of generosity, which he considers as a fair commutation for some favourite vice, that would cost him more to renounce than he is willing to part with. We are all too much disposed to dwell on that smiling side of the prospect which pleases and deceives us, and to shut our eyes upon that part which we do not choose to see, because we are resolved not to quit. Self-love always holds a screen between the superficial self-examiner and his faults. The nominal Christian wraps himself up in forms which he makes himself believe are Religion. He exults in what he does, overlooks what he ought to do, nor ever suspects that what is done at all can be done amiss.

As we are so indolent that we seldom examine a truth on more than one side, so we generally take care that it shall be that side which shall contain some old prejudices. While we will not take pains to correct those prejudices and to rectify our judgment, lest it should oblige us to discard a favourite opinion, we are yet as eager to judge, and as forward to decide, as if we were fully possessed of the grounds on which a sound judgment may be made, and a just decision formed.

We should watch ourselves whether we observe a simple rule of truth and justice, as well in our conversation, as in our ordinary transactions; whether we are exact in our measures of commendation and censure; whether we do not bestow extravagant praise where simple approbation alone is due; whether we do not withhold commendation, where, if given, it would support modesty and encourge merit; whether what deserves only a slight censure as imprudent, we do not reprobate as immoral; whether we do not sometimes affect to overrate ordinary merit, in the hope of securing to ourselves the reputation of candour, that we may on other occasions, with less suspicion, depreciate established excellence. We extol the first because we fancy that it can come into no competition with us, and we derogate from the last because it obviously eclipses us.

Let us ask ourselves if we are conscientiously upright in our estimation of benefits; whether when we have a favour to ask, we do not depreciate its value, when we have one to grant we do not aggravate it.

It is only by scrutinizing the heart that we can know it. It is only by knowing the heart

that we can reform the life. Any careless observer, indeed, when his watch goes wrong, may see that it does so, by casting an eye on the dial plate; but it is only the artist who takes it to pieces and examines every spring and every wheel separately, and who, by ascertaining the precise causes of the irregularity, can set the machine right, and restore the obstructed movements.

The illusions of intellectual vision would be materially corrected by a close habit of cultivating an acquaintance with our hearts. We fill much too large a space in our own imaginations; we fancy we take up more room in the world than Providence assigns to an individual who has to divide his allotment with so many millions, who are all of equal importance in their own eyes; and who, like us, are elbowing others to make room for themselves. Just as in the natural world, where every particle of matter would stretch itself, and move out of its place, if it were not kept in order by surrounding particles; the pressure of other parts reduces this to remain in a confinement from which it would escape, if it were not thus pressed and acted upon on all sides. The conscientious practice we have been recommending, would greatly assist in reducing us to our proper dimensions, and in limiting us to our proper place. We should be astonished if we could see our real diminutiveness, and the speck we actually occupy. When shall we learn from our own feelings of how much consequence every man is to himself?

Nor must the examination be occasional, but regular. Let us not run into long arrears, but settle our accounts frequently. Little articles will run up to a large amount, if they are not cleared off. Even our *innocent* days, as we may choose to call them, will not have passed without furnishing their contingent—our deadness in devotion—our eagerness for human applause—our care to conceal our faults rather than to correct them—our negligent performance of some relative duty—our imprudence in conversation, especially at table—our inconsideration—our driving to the very edge of permitted indulgences—let us keep these—let us keep all our numerous items in small sums. Let us examine them while the particulars are fresh in our memory; otherwise, however we may flatter ourselves that lesser evils will be swallowed up by the greater, we may find when we come to settle the grand account that they will not be the less remembered for not having been recorded.

And let it be one subject of our frequent inquiry, whether since we last scrutinized our hearts, our secular affairs, or our eternal concerns have had the predominance there. We do not mean which of them has occupied most of our time, the largest portion of which must, necessarily, to the generality, be absorbed in the cares of the present life; but on which our affections have been most bent; and especially how we have conducted ourselves when there has arisen a competition between the interests of both.

That general burst of sins which so frequently rushes in on the consciences of the dying, would be much moderated by previous habitual self-examination. It will not do to repent in the lump. The sorrow must be as circumstantial as the sin. Indefinite repentance is no repentance. And it is one grand use of self-inquiry, to remind us, that all unforsaken sins are unrepented sins.

To a Christian there is this substantial comfort attending a minute self-inspection, that when he finds fewer sins to be noted, and more victories over temptation obtained, he has a solid evidence of his advancement, which well repays his trouble.

The faithful searcher into his own heart, that 'chamber of imagery,' feels himself in the situation of the prophet,* who being conducted in vision from one idol to another, the spirit at sight of each, repeatedly exclaims, 'here is another abomination!' The prophet being commanded to dig deeper, the further he penetrated the more evils he found, while the spirit continued to cry out, 'I will show thee yet more abomination.'

Self-examination by detecting self-love, self-denial by weakening its power, self-government by reducing its despotism, turns the temper of the soul from its natural bias, controls the disorderly appetite, and, under the influence of Divine Grace, in a good measure restores to the man that dominion over himself which God at first gave him over the inferior creatures. Desires, passions, and appetites, are brought to move somewhat more in their appointed order; subjects not tyrants. What the stoics, vainly pretended to, Christianity effects. It restores man to a dominion over his own will, and in a good measure enthrones him in that empire which he had forfeited by sin.

He now begins to survey his interior, the awful world within; not indeed with self-complacency, but with the control of a sovereign; he still finds too much rebellion to indulge security, he therefore continues his inspection with vigilance, but without perturbation. He continues to experience a remainder of insubordination and disorder, but this rather solicits to a stricter government than drives him to relax his discipline.

This self-inspection somewhat resembles the correction of a literary performance. After many and careful revisals, though some grosser faults may be done away; though the errors are neither quite so numerous, nor so glaring as at first, yet the critic perpetually perceives faults which he had not perceived before; negligences appear which he had overlooked, and even defects start up which had passed on him for beauties. He finds much to amend, and even to expunge, in what he had before admired. When by rigorous castigation the most acknowledged faults are corrected, his critical acumen, improved by exercise, and a more habitual acquaintance with his subjects, still detect, and will forever detect, new imperfections. But he neither throws aside his work, nor remits his criticism, which if it do not make the work perfect, will at least make the author humble. Conscious that if it is not quite so bad as it was,

* Ezekiel.

it is still at an immeasurable distance from the required excellence.

Is it not astonishing that we should go on repeating periodically, 'Try me, O God,' while we are yet neglecting to try ourselves? Is there not something more like defiance than devotion to invite the inspection of Omniscience to that heart which we ourselves neglect to inspect? How can a Christian solemnly cry out to the Almighty, 'seek the ground of my heart, prove me and exámine my thoughts, and see if there be any ways of wickedness in me,' while he himself neglects to 'examine his heart,' is afraid of 'proving his thoughts,' and dreads to inquire if there 'be any way of wickedness' in himself, knowing that the inquiry ought to lead to the expulsion.

In our self-inquisition let us fortify our virtue by a rigorous exactness in calling things by their proper names. Self-love is particularly ingenious in inventing disguises of this kind. Let us lay them open, strip them bare, face them, and give them as little quarter as if they were the faults of another.—Let us not call wounded pride delicacy.—Self-love is made up of soft and sickly sensibilities. Not that sensibility which melts at the sorrows of others, but that which cannot endure the least suffering itself. It is alive in every pore where self is concerned. A touch is a wound. It is careless in inflicting pain, but exquisitely awake in feeling it. It defends itself before it is attacked, revenges affronts before they are offered, and resents as an insult the very suspicion of an imperfection.

In order then to unmask our hearts, let us not be contented to examine our vices, let us examine our virtues also, 'those smaller faults.' Let us scrutinize to the bottom those qualities and actions which have more particularly obtained public estimation.—Let us inquire if they were genuine in the principle, simple in the intention, honest in the prosecution. Let us ask ourselves if in some admired instances our generosity had no tincture of vanity, our charity no taint of ostentation? Whether when we did such a right action which brought us credit, we should have persisted in doing it, had we foreseen that it would incur censure. Do we never deceive ourselves by mistaking a constitutional indifference of temper for Christian moderation? Do we never construe our love of ease into deadness of the world? Our animal activity into Christian zeal? Do we never mistake ou. obstinacy for firmness, our pride for fortitude, our selfishness for feeling, our love of controversy for the love of God, our indolence of temper for superiority to human applause?—When we have stripped our good qualities bare; when we have made all due deductions for natural temper, easiness of disposition, self-interest; desire of admiration; of every extrinsic appendage, every illegitimate motive, let us fairly cast up the account, and we shall be mortified to see how little there will remain. Pride may impose itself upon us, even in the shape of repentance. The humble Christian is grieved at his faults, the proud man is angry at them.—He is indignant when he discovers he has done wrong, not so much because his sin offends God, as because it has let him see that he is not quite so good as he had tried to make himself believe.

It is more necessary to excite us to the humbling of our pride, than to the performance of certain good actions: the former is more difficult as it is less pleasant. That very pride will of itself stimulate to the performance of many things that are laudable. These performances will reproduce pride, as they were produced by it; whereas humility has no outward stimulus. Divine grace alone produces it. It is so far from being actuated by the love of fame, that it is not humility, till it has laid the desire of fame in the dust.

If an actual virtue consists, as we have frequently had occasion to observe, in the dominion over the contrary vice, humility is the conquest over pride, charity over selfishness: not only a victory over the natural temper, but a substitution of the opposite quality. This proves that all virtue is founded in self-denial, self-denial in self-knowledge, and self-knowledge in self-examination. Pride so insinuates itself in all we do, and say, and think, that our apparent humility has not seldom its origin in pride. That very impatience which we feel at the perception of our faults is produced by the astonishment at finding that we are not perfect.—This sense of our sins should make us humble but not desperate. It should teach us to distrust every thing in ourselves, and to hope for every thing from God. The more we lay open the wounds which sin has made, the more earnestly shall we seek the remedy which Christianity has provided.

But instead of seeking for self-knowledge, we are glancing about us for grounds of self-exultation! We almost resemble the Pharisee, who with so much self-complacency delivered in the catalogue of his own virtues and other men's sins, and, like the Tartars, who think they possess the qualities of those they murder, fancied that the sins of which he accused the publican would swell the amount of his own good deeds. Like him we take a few items from memory, and a few more from imagination. Instead of pulling down the edifice which pride has raised, we are looking round on our good works for buttresses to prop it up. We excuse ourselves from the imputation of many faults by alleging that they are common, and by no means peculiar to ourselves. This is one of the weakest of our deceits. Faults are not less personally ours because others commit them. There is divisibility in sin as well as in matter. Is it any diminution of our error that others are guilty of the same?

Self-love being a very industrious principle, has generally two concerns in hand at the same time. It is as busy in concealing our own defects, as in detecting those of others, especially those of the wise and good. We might indeed direct its activity in the latter instance to our own advantage, for if the faults of good men are injurious to themselves, they might be rendered profitable to us, if we were careful to convert them to their true use. But instead of turning them into a means of promoting our own watchfulness, we employ them mischievously in two ways. We lessen our respect for pious characters when we see the infirmities which are

blended with their fine qualities, and we turn their failings into a justification of our own, which are not like theirs overshadowed with virtues. To admire the excellences of others without imitating them is fruitless admiration; to condemn their errors without avoiding is unprofitable censoriousness.

When we are compelled by our conscience to acknowledge and regret any fault we have recently committed, this fault so presses upon our recollection, that we seem to forget that we have any other. This single error fills our mind, and we look at it as through a telescope, which, while it shows an object, confines the sight to that one object exclusively. Others indeed are more effectually shut out, than if we were not examining this. Thus while the object in question is magnified, the others are as if they did not exist.

It seems to be established into a kind of system not to profit by any thing without us, and not to cultivate an acquaintance with any thing within us. Though we are perpetually remarking on the defects of others, yet when does the remark lead us to study and to root out the same defects in our own hearts? We are almost every day hearing of the death of others, but does it induce us to reflect on death as a thing in which we have an individual concern? We consider the death of a friend as a loss, but seldom apply it as a warning. The death of others we lament, the faults of others we censure, but how seldom do we make use of the one for our own amendment, or of the other for our own preparation.*

It is the fashion of the times to try experiments in the arts, in agriculture, in philosophy. In every science the diligent professor is always afraid there may be some secret which he has not yet attained, some occult principle which would reward the labour of discovery, something even which the assiduous and intelligent have actually found out, but which has hitherto eluded *his* pursuit. And shall the Christian stop short in his scrutiny, shall he not examine and inquire till he lays hold on the very heart and core of religion?

Why should experimental philosophy be the prevailing study, and experimental religion be branded as the badge of enthusiasm, the cant of a hollow profession? Shall we never labour to establish the distinction between appearance and reality, between studying religion critically, and embracing it practically, between having our conduct creditable and our hearts sanctified? Shall we not aspire to do the best things from the highest motives, and elevate our aims with our attainments? Why should we remain in the vestibule when the sanctuary is open? Why should we be contented to dwell in the outer courts when we are invited to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus?

Natural reason is not likely to furnish arguments sufficiently cogent, nor motives sufficiently powerful to drive us to a close self-inspection. Our corruptions foster this ignorance. To this they owe their undisputed possession of our hearts. No principle short of Christianity is strong enough to impel us to a study so disagreeable as that of our faults. Of Christianity humility is the prime grace, and this grace can never take root and flourish in a heart that lives in ignorance of itself. If we do not know the greatness and extent of our sins, if we do not know the imperfections of our virtues, the fallibility of our best resolutions, the infirmity of our purest purposes, we cannot be humble; if we are not humble, we cannot be Christians.

But it may be asked, is there to be no end to this vigilance? Is there no assigned period when this self-denial may become unnecessary? No given point when we may be emancipated from the vexatious self-inspection? Is the matured Christian to be a slave to the same drudgery as the novice? The true answer is—we may cease to watch when our spiritual enemy ceases to assail. We may be off our guard when there is no longer any temptation without. We may cease our self-denial when there is no more corruption within. We may give the reins to our imagination when we are sure its tendencies will be towards heaven. We may dismiss repentance when sin is abolished. We may indulge selfishness when we can do it without danger to our souls. We may neglect prayer when we no longer need the favour of God. We may cease to praise him when he ceases to be gracious to us.—To discontinue our vigilance at any period short of this, will be to defeat all the virtues we hav practised on earth, to put to hazard all our hopes of happiness in heaven.

* For this hint, and a few others on the same subject, the author is indebted to that excellent christian moralist, M. Nicole

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CHAP. XIII.

Self-Love.

'The idol Self,' says an excellent old divine,* 'has made more desolation among men than ever was made in those places where idols were served by human sacrifices. It has preyed more fiercely on human lives, than Moloch or the Minotaur.'

To worship images is a more obvious, but it is scarcely a more degrading idolatry, than to set up self in opposition to God. To devote ourselves to this service is as perfect slavery as the service of God is perfect freedom. If we cannot imitate the sacrifice of Christ in his death, we are called upon to imitate the sacrifice of himself in his will. Even the Son of God declared 'I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me.' This was his grand lesson, this was his distinguishing character.

Self-will is the ever flowing fountain of all the evil tempers which deform our hearts, of all the boiling passions which inflame and disorder society; the root of bitterness on which all its corrupt fruits grow. We set up our own understanding against the wisdom of God, and our own passions against the will of God. If we could ascertain the precise period when sensuality ceased to govern in the animal part of

* Howe.

our nature, and pride in the intellectual, that period would form the most memorable era of the Christian life; from that moment he begins a new date of liberty and happiness; from that stage he sets out on a new career of peace, liberty, and virtue.

Self-love is a Proteus of all shapes, shades, and complexions. It has the power of dilation and contraction as best serves the occasion. There is no crevice so small through which its subtle essence cannot force its way, no space so ample that it cannot stretch itself to fill.—It is of all degrees of refinement, so course and hungry as to gorge itself with the grossest adulation; so fastidious as to require a homage as refined as itself; so artful as to elude the detection of ordinary observers; so specious as to escape the observation of the very heart in which it reigns paramount: yet, though so extravagant in its appetites, it can adopt a moderation which imposes, a delicacy which veils its deformity, an artificial character which keeps its real one out of sight.

We are apt to speak of self-love as if it were only a symptom, whereas it is the distemper itself; a malignant distemper which has possession of the moral constitution, of which malady every part of the system participates. In direct opposition to the effect produced by the touch of the fabled king, which converted the basest materials into gold, this corrupting principle pollutes, by coming in contact with it, whatever is in itself great and noble.

Self-love is the centre of the unrenewed heart. This stirring principle, as has been observed, serves indeed

> The virtuous mind to wake;

but it disturbs it from its slumbers to ends and purposes directly opposite to those assigned to it by our incomparable bard.* Self-love is by no means 'the small pebble which stirs the peaceful lake.' It is rather the pent up wind within, which causes the earthquake; it is the tempest which agitates the sleeping ocean. Had the image been as just as its clothing is beautiful; or rather had *Mr. Pope* been as sound a theologian as he was an exquisite poet, the allusion in his hands might have conveyed a sounder meaning without losing a particle of its elegance. This might have been effected by only substituting the effect for the cause; that is, by making benevolence the principle instead of the consequence, and by discarding self-love from its central situation in the construction of the metaphor.

But by arraying a beggarly idea in princely robes, he knew that his own splendid powers could at any time transform meanness into majesty, and deformity into beauty.

After all however, *le vrai est le seul beau.* Had he not blindly adopted the misleading system of the noble sceptic, 'his guide, philosopher, and friend,' he might have transferred the shining attributes of the base-born thing which he has dressed out with so many graces, to the legitimate claimant—benevolence;—of which self-love is so far from being, as he represents, the moving spring, that they are both working in a course of incessant counteraction, the spirit striving against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit.

To Christian benevolence all the happy effects attributed to self-love might have been fairly traced. It was only to dislodge the idol and make the love of God the centre, and the poet's delightful numbers might have conveyed truths worthy of so perfect a vehicle. 'This centre moved,' does indeed extend its pervading influence in the very manner ascribed to the opposite principle; does indeed spread from its throne in the individual breast, to all those successive circles, 'wide and more wide,' of which the poet makes self-love the first mover.*

The apostle James appears to have been of a different opinion from the ethic bard; he speaks as if he suspected that the pebble stirred the lake a little too roughly. He traces this mischievous principle from its birth to the largest extent of its malign influence.—The question, 'whence come wars and fightings among you,' he answers by another question;—'Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?'

The same pervading spirit which creates hostility between nations, creates animosity among neighbours, and discord in families. It is the same principle which, having in the beginning made 'Cain the first male child,' a murderer in his father's house, has been ever since in perpetual operation; has been transmitted in one unbroken line of succession, through that long chain of crimes of which history is composed to the present triumphant spoiler of Europe.—In cultivated societies, laws repress, by punishing, the overt act in private individuals, but no one thing but the Christian religion has ever been devised to cleanse the spring.

'The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it?' This proposition, this interrogation, we read with complacency, and both the aphorism and the question being a portion of Scripture, we think it would not be decent to controvert it. We read it however with a secret reservation, that it is only the heart of all the rest of the world that is meant, and we rarely make the application which the Scripture intended. Each hopes that there is *one* heart which may escape the charge, and he makes the single exception in favour of his own. But if the exception which every one makes were true, there would not be a deceitful or wicked heart in the world.

As a theory we are ready enough to admire self-knowledge, yet when the practice comes in question we are as blindfolded as if our happiness depended on our ignorance. To lay hold

* Essay on Man, 1, 362

* Self-love thus pushed to social, to divine,
Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine:
Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake,
The centre mov'd, a circle straight succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads;
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace,
His country next, and next all human race.

The author hopes to be forgiven for these remarks. she has hazarded them for the sake of her more youthful readers.—She has not forgotten the time when, in the admiration of youthful enthusiasm, she never suspected that the principle of these finished verses was less excellent than the poetry.

on a religious truth, and to maintain our hold, is no easy matter. Our understandings are not more ready to receive than our affections to lose it. We like to have an intellectual knowledge of divine things, but to cultivate a spiritual acquaintance with them cannot be effected at so cheap a rate. We can even more readily force ourselves to believe that which has no affinity with our understanding, than we can bring ourselves to choose that which has no interest in our will, no correspondence with our passions. One of the first duties of a Christian is to endeavour to conquer this antipathy to the self-denying doctrines against which the human heart so sturdily holds out. The learned take incredible pains for the acquisition of knowledge. The philosopher cheerfully consumes the midnight oil in his laborious pursuits; he willingly sacrifices food and rest to conquer a difficulty in science. Here the labour is pleasant, the fatigue is grateful, the very difficulty is not without its charms. Why do we feel so differently in our religious pursuits? Because in the most operose human studies, there is no contradiction of self, there is no opposition to the will, there is no combat of the affections. If the passions are at all implicated, if self-love is at all concerned, it is rather in the way of gratification than of opposition.

There is such a thing as a mechanical christianity. There are good imitations of religion, so well executed and so resembling, as not only to deceive the spectator, but the artist. Self-love in its various artifices to deceive us to our ruin, sometimes makes use of a means, which, if properly used, is one of the most beneficial that can be devised to preserve us from its influence—the perusal of pious books.

But these books in the hands of the ignorant, the indolent, and the self-satisfied, produce an effect directly contrary to that which they were intended to produce, and which they actually do produce on minds prepared for the perusal. They inflate where they were intended to humble. As some hypochondriacs, who amuse their melancholy hours with consulting indiscriminately every medical book which falls in their way, fancy they find their own case in every page, their own ailment in the ailment of every patient, till they believe they actually feel every pain of which they read, though the work treats of cases diametrically opposite to their own:—so the religious valetudinarian, as unreasonably elated as the others are depressed, reads books descriptive of a highly religious state, with the same unhappy self-application. He feels his spiritual pulse by a watch that has no movements in common with it, yet he fancies that they go exactly alike. He dwells with delight on symptoms, not one of which belongs to him, and flatters himself with their supposed agreement. He observes in those books what are the signs of grace, and he observes them with complete self-application; he traces what are the evidences of being in God's favour, and those evidences he finds in himself.

Self-ignorance appropriates truths faithfully stated but wholly inapplicable. The presumption of the novice arrogates to itself the experience of the advanced Christian. He is persuaded that it is his own case, and seizes on the consolations which belong only to the most elevated piety. Self-knowledge would correct the judgment. It would teach us to use the pattern held out as an original to copy, instead of leading us to fancy that we are already wrought into the assimilation. It would teach us when we read the history of an established Christian, to labour after a conformity to it, instead of mistaking it for the delineation of our own character.

Human prudence, daily experience, self-love, all teach us to distrust others, but all motives combined do not teach us to distrust ourselves; we confide unreservedly in our own heart, though as a guide it misleads, as a counsellor it betrays. It is both party and judge. As the one, it blinds through ignorance, as the other, it acquits through partiality.

Though we value ourselves upon our discretion in not confiding too implicitly in others, yet it would be difficult to find any friend, any neighbour, or even any enemy who has deceived us so often as we have deceived ourselves. If any acquaintance betray us, we take warning, are on the watch, and are careful not to trust him again. But however frequently the bosom traitor deceive and mislead, no such determined stand is made against his treachery: we lie as open to his next assault as if he had never betrayed us. We do not profit by the remembrance of the past delusion to guard against the future.

Yet if another deceive us, it is only in matters respecting this world; but we deceive ourselves in things of eternal moment. The treachery of others can only affect our fortune or our fame, or at worst our peace; but the internal traitor may mislead us to our everlasting destruction. We are too much disposed to suspect others who probably have neither the inclination nor the power to injure us, but we seldom suspect our own heart though it possesses and employs both. We ought, however fairly to distinguish between the simple vanity and the hypocrisy of self-love. Those who content themselves with talking as if the praise of virtue implied the practice, and who expect to be thought good, because they commend goodness, only propagate the deceit which has misled themselves, whereas hypocrisy does not even believe herself. She has deeper motives; she has designs to answer, competitions to promote, projects to effect. But mere vanity can subsist on the thin air of the admiration she solicits, without intending to get any thing by it. She is gratuitous in her loquacity; for she is ready to display her own merit to those who have nothing to give in return, whose applause brings no profit, and whose censure no disgrace.

It is not strange that we should judge of things according to the opinion of others in cases foreign to ourselves; cases on which we have no correct means of determining; but we do it in things which relate immediately to ourselves, thus making not truth but the opinion of others our standard in points which others cannot know, and of which we ought not to be ignorant. We are as fond of the applauses even of the upper gallery as the dramatic poet. Like

him we affect to despise the mob considered as individual judges, yet as a mass, we covet their applause. Like him we feel strengthened by the number of voices in our favour, and are less anxious about the goodness of the work, than the loudness of the acclamation. Success is merit in the eye of both.

But even though we may put more refinement into our self-love, it is self-love still. No subtlety of reasoning, no elegance of taste, though it may disguise the radical principle, can destroy it. We are still too much in love with flattery, even though we may profess to despise that praise which depends on the acclamations of the vulgar. But if we are over anxious for the admiration of the better born and the better bred, this by no means proves that we are not vain; it only proves that our vanity has a better taste. Our appetite is not coarse enough perhaps to relish that popularity which ordinary ambition covets, but do we never feed in secret upon the applauses of more distinguished judges? Is not their having extolled *our* merit a confirmation of our discernment, and the chief ground of our high opinion of *theirs?*

But if any circumstance arise to induce them to change the too favourable opinion which they had formed of us, though their general character remain unimpeachable, and their general conduct as meritorious as when we most admired them, do we not begin to judge them unfavourably? Do we not begin to question their claim to that discernment which we had ascribed to them, to suspect the soundness of their judgment which we had so loudly commended? It is well if we do not entertain some doubt of the rectitude of their principles, as we probably do of the reality of their friendship. We do not candidly allow for the effect which prejudice, which misrepresentation, which party may produce even on an upright mind. Still less does it enter into our calculation that we may actually have deserved their disapprobation, that something in our conduct may have incurred the change in theirs.

It is no low attainment to detect this lurking injustice in our hearts, to strive against it, to pray against it, and especially to conquer it. We may reckon that we have acquired a sound principle of integrity when prejudice no longer blinds our judgment, nor resentment biases our justice; when we do not make our opinion of another depend on the opinion which we conceive he entertains of us. We must keep a just mearsure, and hold an even balance in judging of ourselves as well as of others. We must have no false estimate which shall incline to condemnation without, or to partiality within. The examining principle must be kept sound, or our determination will not be exact. It must be at once a testimony of our rectitude, and an incentive to it.

In order to improve this principle, we should make it a test of our sincerity to search out and to commend the good qualities of those who do not like us. But this must be done without affectation, and without insincerity. We must practice no false candour. If we are not on our guard we may be laying out for the praise of generosity, while we are only exercising a simple act of justice. These refinements of self love are the dangers only of spirits of the higher order, but to such they are dangers.

The ingenuity of self-deceit is inexhaustible. If people extol us, we feel our good opinion of ourselves confirmed. If they dislike us, we do not think the worse of ourselves, but of them; it is not *we* who want merit but *they* who want penetration. If we cannot refuse them discernment, we persuade ourselves that they are not so much insensible to our worth as envious of it. There is no shift, stratagem, or device which we do not employ to make us stand well with ourselves.

We are too apt to calculate our own character unfairly in two ways; by referring to some one signal act of generosity, as if such acts were the common habit of our lives, and by treating our habitual faults, not as common habits, but occasional failures. There is scarcely any fault in another which offends us more than vanity, though perhaps there is none that really injures us so little. We have no patience that another should be as full of self-love as we allow ourselves to be; so full of himself as to have little leisure to attend to us. We are particularly quick sighted to the smallest of his imperfections which interferes with our self-esteem, while we are lenient to his more grave offences, which by not coming in contact with our vanity, do not shock our self-love.

Is it not strange that though we love our selves so much better than we love any other person, yet there is hardly one, however little we value him, that we had not rather be alone with, that we had not rather converse with, that we had not rather come to close quarters with, than ourselves? Scarcely one whose private history, whose thoughts, feelings, actions, and motives we had not rather pry into than our own. Do we not use every art and contrivance to avoid getting at the truth of our own character? Do we not endeavour to keep ourselves ignorant of what every one else knows respecting our faults, and do we not account that man our enemy, who takes on himself the best office of a friend, that of opening to us our real state and condition?

The little satisfaction people find when they faithfully look within, makes them fly more eagerly to things without. Early practice and long habit might conquer the repugnance to look at home, and the fondness for looking abroad. Familiarity often makes us pleased with the society which, while strangers we dreaded. Intimacy with ourselves might produce a similar effect.

We might perhaps collect a tolerably just knowledge of our own character, could we ascertain the *real* opinion of others respecting us; but that opinion being, except in a moment of resentment, carefully kept from us by our own precautions, profits us nothing. We do not choose to know their secret sentiments, because we do not choose to be cured of our error; because we 'love darkness rather than light;' because we conceive that in parting with our vanity, we should part with the only comfort we have, that of being ignorant of our own faults.

Self-knowledge would materially contribute to our happiness, by curing us of that self-sufficiency which is continually exposing us to mortifications. The hourly rubs and vexations which pride undergoes, is far more than an equivalent for the short intoxication of pleasure which it snatches.

The enemy within is always in a confederacy with the enemy without, whether that enemy be the world or the devil. The domestic foe accommodates itself to their allurements, flatters our weaknesses, throws a veil over our vices, tarnishes our good deeds, gilds our bad ones, hoodwinks our judgment, and works hard to conceal our internal springs of action.

Self-love has the talent of imitating whatever the world admires, even though it should be the Christian virtues. It leads us from our regard to reputation to avoid all vices, not only which would bring punishment but discredit by the commission. It can even assume the zeal and copy the activity of Christian charity. It communicates to our conduct those properties and graces, manifested in the conduct of those who are actuated by a sounder motive. The difference lies in the ends proposed. The object of the one is to please God, of the other to obtain the praise of man.

Self-love judging of the feelings of others by its own, is aware that nothing excites so much odium as its own character would do, if nakedly exhibited. We feel, by our own disgust at its exhibition in others, how much disgust we ourselves should excite did we not invest it with the soft garb of gentle manners and polished address. When therefore we would not condescend 'to take the lowest place, to think others better than ourselves, to be courteous and pitiful,' on the true scripture ground, politeness steps in as the accidental substitute of humility, and the counterfeit brilliant is willingly worn by those who will not be at the expense of the jewel.

There is a certain elegance of mind which will often restrain a well-bred man from sordid pleasures and gross voluptuousness. He will be led by his good taste perhaps not only to abhor the excesses of vice, but to admire the theory of virtue. But it is only the *crapule* of vice which he will abhor. Exquisite gratifications, sober luxury, incessant but not unmeasured enjoyment, form the principle of his plan of life, and if he observe a temperance in his pleasures, it is only because excess would take off the edge, destroy the zest, and abridge the gratification. By resisting gross vices he flatters himself that he is a temperate man, and that he has made all the sacrifices which self-denial imposes. Inwardly satisfied, he compares himself with those who have sunk into coarser indulgences, enjoys his own superiority in health, credit, and unimpaired faculties, and triumphs in the dignity of his own character.

There is, if the expression may be allowed, a sort of religious self-deceit, an affection of humility which is in reality full of life, which resolves all importance into what concerns self, which only looks at things as they refer to life. This religious vanity operates in two ways:— We not only fly out at the imputation of the smallest individual fault, while at the same time we affect to charge ourselves with more corruption than is attributed to us; but on the other hand, while we are lamenting our general want of all goodness, we fight for every particle that is disputed. The one quality that is in question always happens to be the very one to which we *must* lay claim, however deficient in others.— Thus, while renouncing the pretensions to every virtue, 'we depreciate ourselves into all.' We had rather talk even of our faults than not occupy the foreground of the canvass.

Humility does not consist in telling our faults, but in bearing to be told of them; in hearing them patiently and even thankfully; in correcting ourselves when told; in not hating those who tell us of them. If we were little in our own eyes, and felt our real insignificance, we should avoid false humility as much as mere obvious vanity; but we seldom dwell on our faults except in a general way, and rarely on those of which we are really guilty. We do it in the hope of being contradicted, and thus of being confirmed in the secret good opinion we entertain of ourselves. It is not enough that we inveigh against ourselves, we must in a manner forget ourselves. This oblivion of self from a pure principle, would go further towards our advancement in christian virtue, than the most splendid actions performed on the opposite ground.

That self-knowledge which teaches us humility, teaches us compassion also. The sick pity the sick. They sympathize with the disorder of which they feel the symptoms in themselves. Self-knowledge also checks injustice by establishing the equitable principle of showing the kindness we expect to receive; it represses ambition by convincing us how little we are entitled to superiority; it renders adversity profitable by letting us see how much we deserve it; it makes prosperity safe, by directing our hearts to HIM who confers it, instead of receiving it as the consequence of our own desert.

We even carry our self-importance to the foot of the throne of God. When prostrate there we are not required, it is true, to forget ourselves, but we are required to remember HIM. We have indeed much sin to lament, but we have also much mercy to adore. We have much to ask, but we have likewise much to acknowledge. Yet our infinite obligations to God do not fill our hearts half as much as a petty uneasiness of our own; nor HIS infinite perfections as much as our own smallest want.

The great, the only effectual antidote to self-love, is to get the love of God and of our neighbour firmly rooted in the heart. Yet let us ever bear in mind that dependance on our fellow creatures is as carefully to be avoided as love of them is to be cultivated, There is none but God on whom the principles of love and dependance form but one duty.

CHAP. XIV.

On the conduct of Christians in their intercourse with the irreligious.

THE combination of integrity with discretion

is the precise point at which a serious Christian must aim in his intercourse, and especially in his debates on religion, with men of the opposite description. He must consider himself as not only having his own reputation but the honour of religion in his keeping. While he must on the one hand 'set his face as a flint' against any thing that may be construed into compromise or evasion, into denying or concealing any christian truth, or shrinking from any commanded duty, in order to conciliate favour; he must, on the other hand, be scrupulously careful never to maintain a christian doctrine with an unchristian temper. In endeavouring to convince he must be cautious not needlessly to irritate. He must distinguish between the honour of God and the pride of his own character, and never be pertinaciously supporting the one, under the pretence that he is only maintaining the other. The dislike thus excited against the disputant is at once transferred to the principle, and the adversary's unfavourable opinion of religion is augmented by the faults of its champion. At the same time, the intemperate champion puts it out of his power to be of any further service to the man whom his offensive manners have disgusted.

A serious Christian, it is true, feels an honest indignation at hearing those truths on which his everlasting hopes depend, lightly treated. He cannot but feel his heart rise at the affront offered to his Maker. But instead of calling down fire from heaven on the reviler's head, he will raise a secret supplication to the God of heaven in his favour, which, if it change not the heart of his opponent, will not only tranquilize his own, but soften it towards his adversary; for we cannot easily hate the man for whom we pray.

He who advocates the sacred cause of Christianity, should be particularly aware of fancying that his being religious will atone for his being disagreeable; that his orthodoxy will justify his uncharitableness, or his zeal make up for his indiscretion. He must not persuade himself that he has been serving God, when he has only been gratifying his own resentment, when he has actually by a fiery defence prejudiced the cause which he might perhaps have advanced by temperate argument and persuasive mildness. Even a judicious silence under great provocation is, in a warm temper, real forbearance. And though 'to keep silence from good words' may be pain and grief, yet the pain and grief must be borne, and the silence must be observed.

We sometimes see imprudent religionists glory in the attacks which their own indiscretion has invited. With more vanity than truth they apply the strong and ill-chosen term of persecution, to the sneers and ridicule which some impropriety of manner or some inadvertency of their own has occasioned. Now and then it is to be feared the censure may be deserved, and the high professor may possibly be but an indifferent moralist. Even a good man, a point we are not sufficiently ready to concede, may have been blameable in some instance on which his censures will naturally have kept a keen eye. On these occasions how forcibly does the pointed caution recur, which was implied by the divine moralist on the mount, and enforced by the apostle Peter, to distinguish for whose sake we are calumniated.

By the way, this sharp look-out of worldly men on the professors of religion, is not without very important uses. While it serves to promote circumspection in the real Christian, the detection to which it leads in the case of the hollow professor, forms a broad and useful line of distinction between two classes of characters so essentially distinct, and yet so frequently, so unjustly, and so malevolently confounded.

The world believes, or at least affects to believe, that the correct and elegant minded religious man is blind to those errors and infirmities, that eccentricity and bad taste, that propensity to diverge from the straight line of prudence, which is discernible in some pious but ill-judging men, and which delight and gratify the enemies of true piety, as furnishing them with so plausible a ground for censure. But if the more judicious and better informed Christian bears with these infirmities, it is not that he does not clearly perceive and entirely condemn them. But he bears with what he disapproves for the sake of the zeal, the sincerity, the general usefulness of these defective characters: these good qualities are totally overlooked by the censurer, who is ever on the watch to aggravate the failings which Christian charity laments without extenuating. It bears with them from the belief that impropriety is less mischievous than carelessness, a bad judgment than a bad heart, and some little excesses of zeal than gross immorality or total indifference.

We are not ignorant how much truth itself offends, though unassociated with any thing that is displeasing. This furnishes an important rule not to add to the unavoidable offence, by mixing the faults of our own character with the cause we support; because we may be certain that the enemy will take care never to separate them. He will always voluntarily maintain the pernicious association in his own mind. He will never think or speak of religion without connecting with it the real or imputed bad qualities of all the religious men he knows or has heard of.

Let not then the friends of truth unnecessarily increase the number of her enemies. Let her not have at once to sustain the assaults to which her divine character inevitably subjects her, and the obloquy to which the infirmities and foibles of her injudicious, and if there are any such, her unworthy champions expose her.

But we sometimes justify our rash violence under colour that our correct piety cannot endure the faults of others. The Pharisees, overflowing with wickedness themselves, made the exactness of their own virtue a pretence for looking with horror on the publicans whom our Saviour regarded with compassionate tenderness, while he reprobated with keen severity the sins, and especially the censoriousness of their accusers. 'Charity,' says an admirable French writer, 'is that law which Jesus Christ came down to bring into the world, to repair the divisions which sin has introduced into it: to be the proof of the reconciliation of man with God, by bringing him into obedience to the divine law; to reconcile him to himself by subju-

gating his passions to his reason; and in fine to reconcile him to all mankind, by curing him of the desire to domineer over them.'

But we put it out of our power to become the instruments of God in promoting the spiritual good of any one, if we stop up the avenue to his heart by violence or imprudence. We not only put it out of our power to do good to all whom we disgust, but are we not liable to some responsibility for the failure of all the good we might have done them, had we not forfeited our influence by our indiscretion? What we do not to others, in relieving their spiritual as well as bodily wants, Christ will punish as not having been done to himself. This is one of the cases in which our own reputation is so inseparably connected with that of religion, that we should be tender of one for the sake of the other.

The modes of doing good in society are various. We should sharpen our discernment to discover them; and our zeal to put them in practice. If we cannot open man's eyes to the truth of religion by our arguments, we may perhaps open them to its beauty by our moderation. Though he may dislike Christianity in itself, he may, from admiring the forbearance of the Christian, be at last led to admire the principle from which it flowed. If he have hitherto refused to listen to the written evidences of religion, the temper of her advocate may be a new evidence of so engaging a kind, that his heart may be opened by the sweetness of the one to the varieties of the other. He will at least be brought to allow that that religion cannot be very bad, the fruits of which are so amiable. The conduct of the disciple may in time bring im to the feet of the Master. A new combination may be formed in his mind. He may begin to see what he had supposed antipathies reconciled, to unite two things which he thought as impossible to be brought together as the two poles—he may begin to couple candour with Christianity.

But if the mild advocate fail to convince, he may persuade; even if he fail to persuade, he will at least leave on the mind of the adversary such favourable impressions, as may induce him to inquire farther. He may be able to employ on some future occasion, to more effectual purpose, the credit which his forbearance will have obtained for him: whereas uncharitable vehemence would probably have forever shut the ears and closed the heart of his opponent against any further intercourse.

But if the temperate pleader should not be so happy as to produce any considerable effect on the mind of his antagonist, he is in any case promoting the interests of his own soul; he is at least imitating the faith and patience of the saints; he is cultivating that 'meek and quiet spirit' of which his blessed Master gave at once the rule, the injunction, and the praise.

If 'all bitterness, and clamour, and malice, and evil speaking,' are expressly forbidden in ordinary cases, surely the prohibition must more peculiarly apply to the case of religious controversialists. Suppose Voltaire and Hume had been left to take their measure of our religion (as one would really suppose they had) from the defences of Christianity by their very able contemporary, bishop Warburton.—When they saw this Goliah in talents and learning, dealing about his ponderous blows, attacking with the same powerful weapons, not the enemies only, but the friends of Christianity, who happened to see some points in a different light from himself; not meeting them as his opponents, but pouncing on them as his prey; not seeking to defend himself, but tearing them to pieces; waging offensive war; delighting in unprovoked hostility—when they saw him thus advocate the Christian cause, with a spirit diametrically opposite to Christianity, would they not exultingly exclaim, in different opposition to the exclamation of the apostolic age, 'See how these Christians *hate* one another!' Whereas had his vast powers of mind and astonishing compass of knowledge been sanctified by the angelic meekness of archbishop Leighton, they would have been compelled to acknowledge, if Christianity be false, it is after all so amiable that it deserves to be true. Might they not have applied to these two prelates what was said of Bossuet and Fenelon, '*l'un prouve la Religion, l'autre la fait aimer.*'

If we studiously contrive how to furnish the most complete triumph to infidels, contentious theology would be our best contrivance. They enjoy the wounds the combatants inflict on each other, not so much from the personal injury which either might sustain, as from the conviction that every attack, however it may terminate, weakens the common cause. In all engagements with a foreign foe, they know that Christianity *must* come off triumphantly. All their hopes are founded on a civil war.

If a forbearing temper should be maintained towards the irreligious, how much more by the professors of religion towards each other. As it is a lamentable instance of human infirmity that there is often much hostility carried on by good men, who profess the same faith; so it is a striking proof of the litigious nature of man that this spirit is less excited by broad distinctions, (such as conscience ought not to reconcile) than by shades of opinion, shades so few and light, that the world would not know they existed at all, if by their animosities the disputants were not so impatient to inform it.

While we should never withhold a clear and honest avowal of the great principles of our religion, let us discreetly avoid dwelling on inconsiderable distinctions, on which, as they do not affect the essentials either of faith or practice, we may allow another to maintain his opinion while we steadily hold fast our own. But in religious as in military warfare, it almost seems as if the hostility were great in proportion to the littleness of the point contested. We all remember when two great nations were on the point of being involved in war for a spot of ground* in another hemisphere, so little known that the very name had scarcely reached us; so inconsiderable that its possession would have added nothing to the strength of either. In civil too, as well as in national and theological disputes, there is often most stress laid on the most indifferent things. Why would the Spanish

* Nootka Sound.

government some years ago so little consult the prejudices of the people, as nearly to produce an insurrection, by issuing an edict for them to relinquish the ancient national dress? Why was the security of the state, and the lives of the subjects put to hazard for a cloak and a jerkin? For the obstinate people made as firm a stand against this trifling requisition, as they could have made for the preservation of their civil or religious liberty, if they had been so happy as to possess either—a stand as firm as they are now nobly making in defence of their country and their independence.

Without invidiously enumerating any of the narrowing names which split Christianity in pieces, and which so unhappily drive the subjects of the Prince of Peace into interminable war, and range them into so many hostile bands, not against the common enemy, but against each other; we cannot forbear regretting that less temper is preserved among these near neighbours in local situation and in Christian truth, than if the attack of either were levelled at Jews, Turks, or Infidels.

Is this that catholic spirit which embraces with the love of charity, though not of approbation, the whole offspring of our common Father —which in the arms of its large affection, without vindicating their faults or adopting their opinions, 'takes every creature in of every kind,' and which like its gracious Author, 'would not that any thing should perish?'

The preference of remote to approximating opinion is, however, by no means confined to the religious world. The Author of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, though so passionate an admirer of the prophet of Arabia as to raise a suspicion of his own Islamism; though so rapturous an eulogist of the apostate Julian as to raise a suspicion of his own polytheism, yet with an inconsistency not uncommon to unbelief, he treats the stout orthodoxy of the vehement Athanasius, with more respect than he shows to the 'scanty creed' of a contemporary philosopher and theologian, whose cold and comfortless doctrines were much less removed from his own.

Might not the twelve monsters which even the incredible strength and labour of Hercules found so hard to subdue, be interpreted as an ingenious allegory, by which were meant twelve popular prejudices? But though the hero went forth armed preternaturally, the goddess of Wisdom herself furnishing him with his helmet, and the god of eloquence with his arrows, yet it is not certain that he conquered the *religious* prejudices, not of the world, but even of Argos and Mycenæ; at least they were not among his earlier conquests; they were not serpents which an *infant* hand could strangle. They were more probably the fruitful hydra, which lost nothing by losing a head, a new head always starting up to supply the incessant decapitation. But though he slew the animal at last, might not its envenomed gore in which his arrows were dipped be the perennial fountain in which persecuting bigotry, harsh intolerance, and polemical acrimony, have continued to dip their pens!

It is a delicate point to hit upon, neither to vindicate the truth in so coarse a manner as to excite a prejudice against it, nor to make any concessions in the hope of obtaining popularity 'If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men,' can no more mean that we should exercise that false candour which conciliates at the expense of sincerity, than that we should defend the truth with so intolerant a spirit, as to injure the cause by discrediting the advocate.

As the apostle beautifully obtests his brethren, not by the power and dignity, but 'by the meekness and gentleness of Christ,' so every Christian should adorn his doctrine by the same endearing qualities, evincing by the brightness of the polish, the solidity of the substance. But he will carefully avoid adopting the external appearance of these amiable tempers as substitutes for piety, when they are only its ornaments. Condescending manners may be one of the numberless modifications of selfishness, and reputation is thus often obtained, where it is not fairly earned. Carefully to examine whether he pleased others, for their good to edification, or in order to gain praise and popularity, is the bounden duty of a Christian.

We should not be angry with the blind for not seeing, nor with the proud for not acknowledging their blindness. We ourselves perhaps were once as blind; happy if we are not still as proud. If not in this instance, in others perhaps they might have made more of our advantages than we have done; we, under their circumstances might have been more perversely wrong than they are, had we not been treated by the enlightened with more patient tenderness than we are disposed to exercise towards them. Tyre and Sidon, we are assured by truth itself, would have repented, had they enjoyed the privileges which Chorazin and Bethsaida threw away. Surely we may do that for the love of God, and for the love of our opponent's soul, which well-bred men do through a regard to politeness. Why should a Christian be more ready to offend against the rule of charity than a gentleman against the rule of decorum? Candour in judging is like disinterestedness in acting; both are statutes of the royal law.

There is also a kind of right which men feel they possess to their own opinion. With this right it is often more difficult to part than even with the opinion itself. If our object be the real good of our opponent; if it be to promote the cause of truth, and not to contest for victory, we shall remember this. We shall consider what a value we put upon our own opinion: why should his, though a false one, be less dear to him, if he believe it true? This consideration will teach us not to expect too much at first. It will teach us the prudence of seeking some general point, in which we cannot fail to agree. This will let him see that we do not differ from him for the sake of differing; which conciliating spirit of ours may bring him to a temper to listen to arguments on topics where our disagreement is wider.

In disputing, for instance, with those who wholly reject the divine authority of the scriptures, we can gain nothing by quoting them, and insisting vehemently on the proof which is to be drawn from them, in support of the point

in debate: their unquestionable truth availing nothing with those who do not allow it. But if we take some common ground, on which both the parties can stand, and reason, from the analogies of natural religion, and the way in which God proceeds in the known and acknowledged course of his providence, to the way in which he deals with us, and has declared he will deal with us, as the God revealed in the Bible; our opponent may be struck with the similarity and be put upon a track of consideration, and be brought to a temper *in* considering which may terminate in the happiest manner. He may be brought at length to be less averse from listening to us, on those grounds and principles of which probably he might otherwise never have seen the value.

Where a disputant of another description cannot endure what he sneeringly calls the strictness of evangelical religion, he will have no objection to acknowledge the momentous truths of man's responsibility to his Maker, of the omniscience, omnipresence, majesty and purity of God. Strive then to meet him on these grounds, and respectfully inquire if he can sincerely affirm that he is acting up to the truths he acknowledges?—If he is living in all respects as an accountable being ought to live?—If he is really conscious of acting as a being ought to act, who knows that he is continually acting under the eye of a just and holy God? You will find he cannot stand on these grounds. Either he must be contented to receive the truth as revealed in the gospel, or be convicted of inconsistency, or self-deceit, or hypocrisy; you will at least drive him off his own ground which he will find untenable, if you cannot bring him over to yours. But while the enemy is effecting his retreat, do not you cut off the means of his return?

Some Christians approve Christianity as it is knowledge, rather than as it is principle. They like it as it *yields a grand object of pursuit*; as it enlarges their view of things, as it opens to them a wider field of inquiry; a fresh source of discovery, an additional topic of critical investigation. They consider it rather as extending the limits of their research, than as a means of ennobling their affections. It furnishes their understanding with a fund of riches on which they are eager to draw, not so much for the improvement of the heart as of the intellect. They consider it as a thesis on which to raise interesting discussion, rather than as premises from which to draw practical conclusions; as an incontrovertible truth, rather than as a rule of life.

There is something in the exhibition of sacred subjects given us by these persons, which according to our conception, is not only mistaken but pernicious. We refer to their treatment of religion as a mere science divested of its practical application, and taken rather as a code of philosophical speculations than of active principles. To explain our meaning, we might perhaps venture to except against the choice of topics almost exclusively made by these writers.

After they have spent half a life upon the evidences, the mere vestibule, so necessary, we allow, to be passed into the temple of Christianity, we accompany them into *their* edifice, and find it composed of materials but too coincident with their former taste. Questions of criticism, of grammar, of history, of metaphysics, of mathematics, and of all the sciences meet us, in the very place of that which saint Paul tells us 'is the end of all,'—that is, 'Charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned, from which' he adds, 'some having swerved, have turned aside to vain jangling.'*

We are very far from applying the latter term to all scientific discussions in religion, of which we should be the very last to deny the use, or question the necessity. Our main objection lies to the preponderance given to such topics by our controversialists in their divinity, and to the spirit too often manifested in their discussions. A preponderance it is, which makes us sometimes fear they consider these things rather as religion itself, than as helps to understand it, as the substitutes, not the allies of devotion. At the same time, a cold and philosophical spirit, often studiously maintained, seems to confirm the suspicion, that religion with them is not accidentally, but essentially, and solely an exercise of the wits, and a field for the display of intellectual prowess—as if the salvation of souls were a thing by the by.

These prize fighters in theology remind us of the philosophers of other schools: we feel as if we were reading Newton against Des Cartes, or the theory of caloric in opposition to phlogiston. 'Nous le regardons,' says the eloquent Saurin upon some religious subject, 'pour la plupart, de la meme maniere, dont on envisage les ide es d'un ancien philosophe sur le gouvernement.'—The practical part of religion in short is forgotten, is lost in its theories; and what is worst of all, a temper hostile to the spirit of Christianity is employed to defend or illustrate its positions.

The latter effect might be traced beyond the foregoing causes, to another nearly allied to them—the habit of treating religion as a science capable of demonstration. On a subject evidently admitting but of moral evidence, we lament to see questions dogmatically proved, instead of being temperately argued. Nay we could almost smile at the sight of some intricate and barren novelty in religion, *demonstrated* to the satisfaction of some one ingenious theorist, who draws upon himself instantly a hundred confutations of every position he maintains. The ulterior stages of the debate are often such as might 'make angels weep.' And when we remember that even in the most important questions, involving eternal interests, 'probability is the very guide of life,'† we could most devoutly wish, that on subjects, to say the least, not 'generally necessary to salvation,' infallibility were not the claim of the disputant, or personal animosity the condition of his failure.

Such speculatists who are more anxious to make proselytes to an opinion, than converts to a principle, will not be so likely to convince an

* See 1 Tim. i, 5, 6, also verse 4, in which the apostle hints at certain 'fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is by faith.' We dare not say how closely this description applies to some modern controvertists in theology.

† Butler's Introduction to 'The Analogy.'

opponent, as the Christian who is known to act up to his convictions, and whose genuine piety will put life and heart into his reasonings. The opponent probably knows already all the ingenious arguments which books supply. Ingenuity therefore, if he be a candid man, will not be so likely to touch him, as that 'godly sincerity' which he cannot but perceive the heart of his antagonist is dictating to his lips. There is a simple energy in pure Christian truth which a factitious principle imitates in vain. The 'knowledge which puffeth up' will make few practical converts unaccompanied with the 'charity which edifieth.'

To remove prejudices, then, is the bounden duty of a Christian, but he must take care not to remove them by conceding what integrity forbids him to concede. He must not wound his conscience to save his credit. If an ill bred roughness disgusts another, a dishonest complaisance undoes himself. He must remove all obstructions to the reception of truth, but the truth itself he must not adulterate. In clearing away the impediment he must secure the principle.

If his own reputation be attacked, he must defend it by every lawful means; nor will he sacrifice the valuable possession to any demand but that of conscience, to any call but the imperative call of duty. If his good name be put in competition with any other earthly good, he will preserve it, however dear may be the good he relinquishes; but, if the competition lie between his reputation and his conscience, he has no hesitation in making the sacrifice, costly as it is. A feeling man struggles for his fame as for his life, but if he be a Christian, he parts with it, for he knows that it is not the life of his soul.

For the same reason that we must not be over anxious to vindicate our fame, we must be careful to preserve it from any unjust imputation. The great apostle of the Gentiles has set us an admirable example in both respects, and we should never consider him in one point of view, without recollecting his conduct in the other. So profound is his humility that he declares himself 'less than the least of all saints.' Not content with this comparative depreciation, he proclaims his actual corruptions. 'In me, that is, in my flesh, there is no good thing.' Yet this deep self-abasement did not prevent him from asserting his own calumniated worth, from declaring that he was not behind the very 'chiefest of the apostles;'—again—'As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting,' &c. He then enumerates, with a manly dignity, tempered with a noble modesty, a multitude of instances of his unparalleled sufferings and his unrivalled zeal.

Where only his own personal feelings were in question, how self-abasing, how self-annihilating! But where the unjust imputation involved the honour of Christ and the credit of religion 'what carefulness is wrought in him, yea what clearing of himself; yea what vehement desire; yea what zeal!'

While we rejoice in the promises annexed to the beatitudes, we should be cautious of applying to ourselves promises which do not belong to us, particularly that which is attached to the last beatitude. When our fame is attacked, let us carefully inquire, if we are 'suffering for righteousness' sake,' or for our own faults; let us examine, whether we may not deserve the censures we have incurred. Even if we are suffering in the cause of God, may we not have brought discredit on that holy cause by our imprudence, our obstinacy, our vanity; by our zeal without knowledge, and our earnestness without temper? Let us inquire, whether our revilers have not some foundation for the charge? Whether we have not sought our own glory more than that of God? Whether we are not more disappointed at missing that revenue of praise, which we thought our good works were entitled to bring us in, than at the wound religion may have sustained? Whether, though our views were right on the whole, their purity was not much alloyed by human mixtures? Whether neglecting to count the cost, we did not expect unmixed approbation, uninterrupted success, and a full tide of prosperity and applause, totally forgetting the reproaches received, and the obloquy sustained by 'the Man of Sorrows.'

If we can on an impartial review, acquit ourselves as to the general purity of our motives, the general integrity of our conduct, the unfeigned sincerity of our endeavours, then we may indeed, though with deep humility, take to ourselves the comfort of this divine beatitude. When we really find, that men only speak evil of us for *his* sake in whose cause we have laboured, however that labour may have been mingled with imperfection, we may indeed 'rejoice and be exceeding glad.' Submission may be elevated into gratitude, and forgiveness into love.

CHAP. XV.

On the propriety of introducing Religion in general conversation.

May we be allowed to introduce here an opinion warmly maintained in the world, and which indeed strikes at the root of all rules for the management of religious debate recommended in the preceding chapter? It is, that the subject of religion ought on no occasion to be introduced in mixed company: that the diversity of sentiment upon it is so great, and so nearly connected with the tenderest feelings of our minds, as to be liable to lead to heat and contention. Finally, that it is too grave and solemn a topic to be mixed in the miscellaneous circle of social discourse, much less in the festive effusions of convivial cheerfulness. Now, in answer to these allegations, we must at least insist, that should religion, on other grounds, be found entitled to social discussion, the last observation, if true, would prove convivial cheerfulness incompatible with the spirit and practice of religion, rather than religion inadmissible into cheerful parties. And it is certainly a retort difficult of evasion, that where to introduce Religion herself is to endanger her honour,

there she rather suffers in reputation by the presence of her friend. The man endeared by conviction to his religion will never bear to be long, much less to be statedly separated from the object of his affections: and he whose zeal once determined him 'to know *nothing*' amongst his associates, 'but Jesus Christ and him crucified,' never could have dreamt of a latitude of interpretation, which would admit a Christian into scenes where *every thing* but Jesus Christ and him crucified, might be recognized with credit.

These principles appear so plain and incontrovertible, that the question *seems* rather to call for a different statement, viz.—Why religion should not be deemed admissible into every social meeting and friendly circle in which a Christian himself would choose to be found? That it is too weighty and important a subject for discussion, is an argument, which, standing alone, assumes the gross absurdity that either men never talk of that which most nearly interests them, or that when they do, they talk improperly. They will not, it is true, introduce a private concern, however important, in which no one is interested but themselves. But in the subject of religion, who is not interested? Or where will topics be found more universal in their application to all times, persons, places and circumstances, as well as more important, than those which relate to the eternal welfare of mankind?

Nor will it be avowed with great colour of reason, that topics so important suffer in point of gravity, or in the respect of mankind, by frequent discussion. We never observed men grow indifferent to their health, their affairs, their friends, their country, in proportion as these were made the subjects of their familiar discourse. On the contrary, oblivion has been noticed as the offspring of silence. The man who never mentions his friend, is, we think, in general most likely to forget him. And far from deeming the name of ONE, greater than any earthly friend 'taken in vain,' when mentioned discreetly in conversation, we generally find him most remembered and respected in secret, by those whose memories are occasionally refreshed by a reference to his word and authority in public. 'Familiarity,' indeed, we have been told, 'produces contempt;' a truism, on which we are convinced many persons, honestly, though blindly, rest their habitual, and even systematic reserve on religious subjects. But 'familiarity' in our mind has reference rather to the manner, than to the act, of introducing religion. To us it is synonymous with a certain trite and trivial repetition of serious remarks, evidently 'to no profit,' which we sometimes hear from persons familiarized, rather by education than feeling, to the language of piety.

More particularly we refer it to a still more criminal habit which, to their disgrace, some professors of religion share with the profane, of raising a laugh by the introduction of a religious observation or even a Scriptural quotation. 'To court a grin when we should woo a soul,' is surely an abuse of religion, as well in the parlour as the pulpit. Nor has the senate itself been always exempt from this impropriety. Dr. Johnson has long since pronounced a jest drawn from the Bible, the vulgarest because the easiest of all jests.—And far from perverting religious topics to such a purpose himself, a feeling Christian would not often be found, where such would be the probable consequence of offering a pious sentiment in company.

That allusions involving religious questions are often productive of dispute and altercation, is a fact, which though greatly exaggerated, must yet in a degree be admitted. This circumstance may in some measure account for the singular reception which a religious remark is often observed to meet with in the world. It is curious to notice the surprise and alarm which, on such occasions, will frequently pervade the party present. The remark is received as a stranger guest, of which no one knows the quality or intentions. And, like a species of intellectual foundling, it is cast upon the company without a friend to foster its infancy, or to own any acquaintance with the parent. A fear of consequences prevails. It is obvious that the feeling is—'We know not into what it may grow: it is therefore safer to stifle it in the birth.' This, if not the avowed, is the implied sentiment.

But is not this delicacy, this *mauvaise honte*, so peculiar perhaps to our countrymen on religious subjects, the very cause which operates so unfavourably upon that effect which it labours to obviate? Is not the very infrequency of moral or religious observations, a sufficient account to be given both of the perplexity and the irritation said to be consequent upon their introduction? And were not religion (we mean such religious topics as may legitimately arise in mixed society,) banished so much as it is from conversation, might not its occasional recurrence become by degrees as natural, perhaps as interesting, certainly as instructive, and after all as safe, as 'a close committee on the weather,' or any other of the authorized topics which are about as productive of amusement as of instruction? People act as if religion were to be regarded at a distance; as if even a respectful ignorance were to be preferred to a more familiar approach. This reserve, however, does not give an air of respect, so much as of mystery, to religion. An able writer* has observed, '*that* was esteemed the most sacred part of Pagan devotion which was the most impure, and the only thing that was commendable in it is, that it was kept a great mystery.' He approves of nothing in this religion but the modesty of withdrawing itself from the eyes of the world.—But Christianity requires not to be shrouded in any such mysterious recesses. She does not, like the Eastern monarchs, owe her dignity to her concealment. She is, on the contrary, most honoured where most known, and most revered where most clearly visible.

It will be obvious that hints rather than argument belong to our present undertaking. In this view, we may perhaps be excused if we offer a few general observations, upon the different occasions on which a well regulated mind would be solicitous to introduce religion into social discourse. The person possessed of such

* Bishop Sherlock.

a mind, would be mainly anxious, in a society of Christians, that something should appear indicative of their profession. He would accordingly feel a strong desire to effect it, when he plainly perceived his company engaged on no other topic either innocently entertaining, or rationally instructive. The desire, however, would by no means cloud his brow, give an air of impatience to his countenance, or render him inattentive to the general tone and temper of the circle. On the contrary, he would endeavour to feel additional interest in his neighbour's suggestions, in proportion as he hoped in turn to attract notice to his own. He would show long forbearance to the utmost extent of conscientious toleration. In the prosecution of his favourite design, he would never attempt a forced or unreasonable allusion to serious subjects; a caution requiring the nicest judgment and discrimination, most particularly where he felt the sentiments or the zeal of his company to be not congenial with his own. His would be the spirit of the prudent mariner, who does not even approach his native shore without carefully watching the winds, and sounding the channels; knowing well that a temporary delay, even on an unfriendly element, is preferable to a hasty landing his company, on shore indeed, but upon the point of a rock.

Happily for our present purpose, the days we live in, afford circumstances both of foreign and domestic occurrence, of every possible variety of colour and connection, so as to leave scarcely any mind unfurnished with a store of progressive remarks by which the most instructive truths may be approached through the most obvious topics. And a prudent mind will study to make its approaches to such an ultimate object, progressive, it will know also where to stop, rather indeed out of regard to others than to itself. And in the manly avowal of its sentiments, avoiding as well what is canting in utterance as technical in language, it will make them at once appear not the ebullition of an ill educated imagination, but the result of a long exercised understanding.

Nothing will be more likely to attract attention or secure respect to your remarks, than the good taste in which they are delivered. On common topics, we reckon him the most elegant speaker whose pronunciation and accent are so free from all peculiarities, that it cannot be determined to what place he owes his birth. A polished critic of Rome accuses one of the finest of her historians of provinciality. This is a fault obvious to less enlightened critics, since the Attic herb-woman could detect the provincial dialect of a great philosopher. Why must religion have her *Patavinity?* Why must the Christian adopt the quaintness of a party, or a scholar the idiom of the illiterate? Why should a valuable truth be combined with a vulgar or fanatical expression? If either would offend when separate, how inevitably must they disgust when the one is mistakingly intended to set off the other. Surely this is not enchasing our 'apples of gold in pictures of silver.'

We must not close this part of our subject without alluding to another, and still more delicate introduction of religion, in the way of *reproof.* Here is indeed a point in religious conduct to which we feel it a boldness to make any reference at all. Bold indeed, is that casuist, who would lay down general rules on a subject where the consciences of men seem to differ so widely from each other: and feeble too often will be its justest rules, where the feelings of timidity or delicacy rush in with a force which sweeps down many a land-mark erected for its own guidance, even by conscience itself.

Certainly much allowance, perhaps respect, is due in cases of very doubtful decision, to those feelings which, after the utmost self regulation of mind, are found to be irresistible. And certainly the habits and modes of address attached to refined society, are such as to place personal observations on a very different footing to that on which they stand by nature. A frown, even a cold and disapproving look, may be a reception which the profane expression or loose action of a neighbour of rank and opulence, may have never before encountered from his flatterers or convivial companions. A vehement censure in his case might inflame his resentment without amending his fault.—Whether the attempt be to correct a vice or rectify an error, one object should ever be steadily kept in view—to conciliate rather than to contend, to inform but not to insult, to evince that we assume, not the character of a dictator, but the office of a Christian friend; that we have the best interests of the offender, and the honour of religion at heart, and that to reprove is so far from a gratification, that it is a trial to ourselves, the effort of conscience, not the effect of choice.

The feelings, therefore, of the person to be admonished should be most scrupulously consulted. The admonition, if necessarily strong, explicit and personal, should yet be friendly, temperate, and well bred. An offence, even though publicly committed, is generally best reproved in private, perhaps in writing. Age, superiority of station, previous acquaintance, above all, that sacred profession to which the honour of religion is happily made a personal concern, are circumstances which especially call for, and sanction the attempt recommended. And he must surely be unworthy his Christian vocation, who would not conscientiously use any influence or authority which he might chance to possess, in discountenancing or rectifying the delinquency he condemns.

We are, indeed, as elsewhere, after the closest reflection and longest discussion often forced into the general conclusion, that 'a good heart is the best casuist.'—And doubtless where true Christian benevolence towards man meets in the same mind with an honest zeal for the glory of God, a way will be found, let us rather say will be opened, for the right exercise of this, as of every virtuous disposition.

Let us ever remember what we have so often insisted on, that self-denial is the ground work, the indispensable requisite for every Christian virtue; that without the habitual exercise of this principle, we shall never be followers of him 'who pleased not himself.' And when we are called by conscience to the largest use of it in practice, we must arm ourselves with the highest considerations for the trial; we must consi

der him, who (through his faithful reproofs) 'endured the contradiction of sinners against himself.' And when even from Moses we hear the truly evangelical precept, 'thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy brother, and not suffer sin upon him;' we must duly weigh how strongly its performance is enforced upon ourselves, by the conduct of one greater than Moses, who expressly 'suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his footsteps.'

CHAP. XVI.

Christian Watchfulness.

Of all the motives to vigilance and self-discipline which Christianity presents, there is not one more powerful than the danger, from which even religious persons are not exempt, of slackening in zeal and declining in piety. Would we could affirm, that coldness in religion is confined to the irreligious! If it be melancholy to observe an absence of Christianity where no profession of it was ever made, it is far more grievous to mark its declension, where it once appeared not only to exist, but to flourish. We feel on the comparison, the same distinct sort of compassion with which we contemplate the pecuniary distresses of those who have been always indigent, and of those who have fallen into want from a state of opulence. Our concern differs not only in degree but in kind.

This declension is one of the most awakening calls to watchfulness, to humility, and self-inspection, which religion can make to him 'who thinketh he standeth;' which it can make to him who, sensible of his own weakness, ought to feel the necessity 'of strengthening the things which remain that are ready to die.'

If there is not any one circumstance which ought more to alarm and quicken the Christian, than that of finding himself grow languid and indifferent, after having made not only a profession but a progress, so there is not a more reasonable motive of triumph to the profane, not one cause which excites in him a more plausible ground of suspicion, either that there never was any truth in the profession of the person in question, or which is a more fatal, and, to such a mind, a more natural conclusion—that there is no truth in religion itself. At best, he will be persuaded that this can only be a faint and feeble principle, the impulse of which is so soon exhausted, and which is by no means found sufficiently powerful to carry on its votary throughout his course. He is assured that piety is only an outer garment, put on for show or convenience, and that when it ceases to be wanted for either it is laid aside. In these unhappy instances the evil seldom ceases with him who causes it. The inference becomes general, that all religious men are equally unsound or equally deluded, only that some are more prudent, or more fortunate, or greater hypocrites than others. After the falling away of one promising character, the old suspicion recurs and is confirmed, and the defection of others pronounced to be infallible.

There seems to be this marked distinction in the different opinions which religious and worldly men entertain respecting human corruption. The candid Christian is contented to believe it, as an indisputable general truth, while he is backward to suspect the wickedness of the individual, nor does he allow himself to give full credit to particular instances without proof. The man of the world, on the contrary, who denies the general principle is extremely prone to suspect the individual: Thus his knowledge of mankind not only furnishes a proof, but outstrips the truth of the doctrine: though he denies it as a proposition of Scripture, he is eager to establish it as a fact of experiment.

But the probability is, that the man by his departure from the principles with which he appeared to set out, so much gratifies the thoughtless, and grieves the serious mind, never was a sound and genuine Christian. His religion was perhaps taken up on some accidental circumstance, built on some false ground, produced by some evanescent cause; and though it cannot be fairly pronounced that he intended by his forward profession and prominent zeal, to deceive others, it is probable that he himself was deceived. Perhaps he had made too sure of himself. His early profession was probably rather bold and ostentatious; he had imprudently fixed his stand on ground so high as to be not easily tenable, and from which a descent would be but too observable. While he thought he never could be too secure of his own strength, he allowed himself to be too censorious on the infirmities of others, especially of those whom he had apparently outstripped, and who, though they had started together, he had left behind him in the race.

Might it not be a safer course, if in the outset of the Christian life, a modest and self-distrusting humility were to impose a temporary restraint on the forwardness of outward profession? A little knowledge of the human heart, a little suspicion of the deceitfulness of his own, would not only moderate the intemperance of an ill-understood zeal, should the warm convert become an established Christian, but would save the credit of religion, which will receive a fresh wound in the possible event of his desertion from her standard.

Some of the most distinguished Christians in this country began their religious career with this graceful humility. They would not suffer their change of character, and their adoption of new principles, and a new course to be blazoned abroad, as the affectionate zeal of their confidential friends would have advised, till the principles they had adopted were established, and worked into habits of piety; till time and experience had evinced that the grace of God had not been bestowed on them in vain. Their progress proved to be such as might have been inferred from the modesty of their outset. They have gone on with a perseverance which difficulties have only contributed to strengthen, and experience to confirm; and will, through divine aid, doubtless go on, shining more and more un to the perfect day.

But to return to the less steady convert. Perhaps religion was only, as we have hinted else-

where, one pursuit among many which he had taken up when other pursuits failed, and which he now lays down because, his faith not being rooted and grounded, fails also;—or the temptation arising from without might concur with the failure within. If vanity be his infirmity, he will shrink from the pointed disapprobation of his superiors. If the love of novelty be his besetting weakness, the very peculiarity and strictness of religion, the very marked departure from the 'gay and primrose path' in which he had before been accustomed to walk, which first attracted, now repels him. The attention which his early deviation from the manners of the world drew upon him, and which once flattered, now disgusts him. The very opposition which once animated, now cools him. He is discouraged at the near view, subdued by the required practice, of that Christian self-denial which, as a speculation, had appeared so delightful. Perhaps his fancy had been fired by some act of Christian heroism, which he felt an ambition to imitate: a feeling which tales of martial prowess, or deeds of chivalry, something that, promising celebrity and exciting emulation, had often kindled before. The truth is, religion had only taken hold of his imagination, his heart had been left out of the question.

Or he had in the twilight of his first awakening, seen religion only as something to be believed; he now finds that much is to be done in the new life, and much which was habitual to the old one left undone. Above all, he did not reckon on the CONSISTENCY which the Christian life demands. Warm affections rendered the practice of some right actions easy to him; but he did not include in his faulty and imperfect scheme, the self-denial, the perseverance, the renouncing of his own will and his own way, the evil report as well as the good report, to which every man pledges himself, when he enlists under the banner of Christ. The cross which it was easy to venerate, he finds it hard to bear.

Or religion might be adopted when he was in affliction, and he is now happy:—when he was in bad circumstances, and he is now grown affluent. Or it might be assumed as something wanting to his recommendation to that party or project by which he wished to make his way; as something that would better enable him to carry certain points which he had in view; something that, with the new acquaintance he wished to cultivate, might obliterate certain defects, in his former conduct, and white-wash a somewhat sullied reputation.

Or in his now more independent situation, it may be he is surrounded by temptations, softened by blandishments, allured by pleasures, which he never expected would arise to weaken his resolutions. These new enchantments make it not so easy to be pious, as when he had little to lose and every thing to desire, as when the world wore a frowning, and religion an inviting aspect. Or he is perhaps by the vicissitudes of life, transferred from a sober and humble society, where to be religious was honourable, to a more fashionable set of associates, where, as the disclosure of his piety would add nothing to his credit, he set out with taking pains to conceal it, till it has fallen into that gradual oblivion, which is the natural consequence of its being kept out of sight.

But we proceed to a far more interesting and important character. The one indeed whom we have been slightly sketching, may by his inconstancy do much harm; the one on which we are about to animadvert, might by his consistency and perseverance effect essential good. Even the sincere, and to all appearance, the established Christian, especially if his situation in life be easy, and his course smooth and prosperous, had need keep a vigilant eye upon his own heart. For such a one it will not be sufficient that he keep his ground if he do not advance in it. Indeed it will be a sure proof that he has gone back, if he has not advanced.

In a world so beset with snares, various are the causes which may possibly occasion in even good men a slow but certain decline in piety. A decline scarcely perceptible at first, but which becomes more visible in its subsequent stages. When therefore we suspect our hearts of any declension in piety, we should not compare ourselves with what we were in the preceding week or month, but what we were at the supposed height of our character. Though the alteration was not perceptible in its gradual progress, one shade melting into the next, and each losing its distinctness, yet when the two remote states are brought into contrast, the change will be strikingly obvious.

Among other causes, may be assigned the indiscreet forming of some worldly connexion, especially that of marriage. In this connexion, for *union* it cannot be called, it is to be lamented that the irreligious more frequently draw away the religious to their side, than that the contrary takes place; a circumstance easily accounted for by those who are at all acquainted with the human heart.

Or the sincere but incautious Christian may be led by a strong affection which assumes the shape of virtue, into a fond desire of establishing his children advantageously in the world, into methods which if not absolutely incorrect, are yet ambiguous at the best. In order to raise those whom he loves to a station above their level, he may be tempted, while self-deceit will teach him to sanctify the deed by the motive, to make some little sacrifices of principle, some little abatements of that strict rectitude, for which in the abstract no man would more strenuously contend. And as it may be in general observed, that the most amiable minds are most susceptible of the strongest natural affections; of course the very tenderness of the heart lays such characters peculiarly open to a danger, to which the unfeeling and the obdurate are less exposed.

If the person in question be of the sacred order, no small danger may arise from his living under the eye of an irreligious, but rich and bountiful patron. It is his duty to make religion appear amiable in his eyes.—He ought to conciliate his good will by every means which rectitude can sanction. But though his very piety will stimulate his discretion in the adoption of those means, he will take care never to let his discretion intrench on his integrity.

If he be under obligations to him, he may be in danger of testifying his gratitude, and furthering his hopes by some electioneering manœuvres, and by too much electioneering society. He may, unawares be tempted to too much conformity to his friend's habits, too much conviviality in his society. And when he witnesseth so much kindness and urbanity in his manners, possibly so much usefulness and benevolence in his life, he may be even tempted to suspect that he himself may be wrong; to accuse himself of being somewhat churlish in his own temper, a little too austere in his habits, and rather hard in his judgment of a man so amiable. He will be still more likely to fall into this error if he expects a favour than if he has obtained it; for though it is not greatly to the honour of human nature, we daily see how much keener are the feelings which are excited by hope than those which are raised by gratitude.—The favour which has been already conferred, excites a temperate, that which we are looking for, a fervid feeling.

These relaxing feelings and these softened dispositions, aided by the seducing luxury of the table, and the bewitching splendour of the apartment; by the soft accommodations which opulence exhibits; and the desires which they are too apt to awaken in the dependant, may, not impossibly, lead by degrees to a criminal timidity in maintaining the purity of his own principles, in supporting the strictness of his own practice. He may gradually lose somewhat of the dignity of his professional, and of the sobriety of the Christian character. He may be brought to forfeit the independence of his mind; and in order to magnify his fortune, may neglect to magnify his office.

Even here, from an increasing remissness in self-examination, he may deceive himself by persisting to believe—for the films are now growing thick over his spiritual sight—that his motives are defensible. Were not his discernment labouring under a temporary blindness, he would reprobate the character which interested views have insensibly drawn him in to act. He would be as much astonished to be told that his character was become his own, as was the royal offender, when the righteous boldness of the prophet pronounced the heart-appalling words, 'Thou art the man.'

Still he continues to flatter himself that the reason of his diminished opposition to the faults of his friend, is not because he has a more lucrative situation in view, but because he may, by a slight temporary concession, and a short suspension of a severity which he begins to fancy he has carried too far, secure for his future life a more extensive field of usefulness, in the benefice which is hanging over his head.

In the mean time hope and expectation so fill his mind, that he insensibly grows cold in the prosecution of his positive duties. He begins to lament that in his present situation he can make but few converts, that he sees but small effects of his labours, not perceiving that God may have withdrawn his blessing from a ministry which is exercised on such questionable grounds. With his new expectations he continues to blend his old ideas. He feasts his imagination with the prospect of a more fruitful harvest on an unknown, and perhaps an unbroken soil—as if human nature were not pretty much the same every where; as if the labourer were accountable for the abundance of his crop, and not solely for his own assiduity; as if actual duty, faithfully performed, even in this circumscribed sphere in which God has cast our lot, is not more acceptable to him, than theories of the most extensive good, than distant speculations and improbable projects, for the benefit even of a whole district; while, in the indulgence of these airy schemes, our own specific and appointed work lies neglected, or is performed without energy and without attention.

Self-love so naturally infatuates the judgment, that it is no paradox to assert that we look too far, and yet do not look far enough. We look too far when passing over the actual duties of the immediate scene, we form long connected trains of future projects, and indulge our thoughts in such as are most remote, and perhaps least probable. And we do not look far enough when the prospective mind does not shoot beyond all these little earthly distances, to that state, falsely called remote, whither all our steps are not the less tending, because our eyes are confined to the home scenes. But while the precariousness of our duration ought to set limits to our designs, it should furnish incitements to our application. Distant projects are too apt to slacken present industry; while the magnitude of schemes, probably impracticable, may render our actual exertions cold and sluggish.

Let it be observed that we would be the last to censure any of those fair and honourable means of improving his condition which every man, be he worldly or religious, owes to himself, and to his family. Saints as well as sinners have in common, what a great genius calls, 'certain inconvenient appetites of eating and drinking;' which while we are in the body must be complied with. It would be a great hardship on good men, to be denied any innocent means of fair gratification. It would be a peculiar injustice that the most diligent labourer should be esteemed the least worthy of his hire, the least fit to rise in his profession.

The more serious clergyman has also the same warm affection for his children with his less scrupulous brother, and consequently the same laudable desire for their comfortable establishment; only in his plans for their advancement he should neither entertain ambitious views nor prosecute any views, even the best, by methods not consonant to the strictness of his avowed principles. Professing to 'seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,' he ought to be more exempt from an over anxious solicitude than those who profess it less zealously. Avowing a more determined confidence that all other things will, as far as they are absolutely necessary, 'be added unto him,' he should, as it is obvious he commonly does, manifest practically, a more implicit trust, confiding in the gracious and cheering promise, that promise expressed both negatively and positively, as if to comfort with a double confirmation, that God who is both his light and defence, who will give grace and worship, will also withhold no good thing from them that live a godly life.'

It is one of the trials of faith appended to the sacred office, that its ministers, like the father of the faithful, are liable to go out, 'not knowing whither they go;' and this not only at their first entrance into their profession, but through life; an inconvenience to which no other profession, is necessarily liable; a trial which is not perhaps fairly estimated.

This remark will naturally raise a laugh among those who at once hold the function in contempt, deride its ministers, and think their well-earned remuneration lavishly and even unnecessarily bestowed. They will probably exclaim with as much complacency in their ridicule, as if it were really the test of truth—'A great cause of commisseration truly, to be transferred from a starving curacy to a plentiful benefice, or from the vulgar society of a country parish to be a stalled theologian in an opulent town!'

We are far from estimating at a low rate the exchange from a state of uncertainty to a state of independence, from a life of penury to comfort, or from a barely decent to an affluent provision.—But does the ironical remarker rate the feelings and affections of the heart at nothing? If he insists that money is that *chief* good of which ancient philosophy says so much, we beg leave to insist that it is not the *only* good. We are above the affectation of pretending to condole with any man on his exaltation, but there are feelings which a man of acute sensibility, rendered more acute by an elegant education, values more intimately than silver or gold.

Is it absolutely nothing to resign his local comforts, to break up his local attachments, to have new connexions to form, and that frequently at an advanced period of life? Connexions, perhaps less valuable than those he is quitting? Is it nothing for a faithful minister to be separated from an affectionate people, a people not only whose friendship, but whose progress has constituted his happiness here, as it will make his joy and crown of rejoicing hereafter?

Men of delicate minds estimate things by their affections as well as by their circumstances: to a man of a certain cast of character, a change however advantageous, may be rather an exile than a promotion. While he gratefully accepts the good, he receives it with an edifying acknowledgment of the imperfection of the best human things. These considerations we confess add the additional feelings of kindness to their persons, and of sympathy with their vicissitudes, to our respect and veneration for their holy office.

To themselves, however, the precarious tenor of their situation presents an instructive emblem of the uncertain condition of human life, of the transitory nature of the world itself. Their liableness to a sudden removal, gives them the advantage of being more especially reminded of the necessity and duty of keeping in a continual posture of preparation, having 'their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand.' They have also the same promises which supported the Israelites in the desert.—The same assurance which cheered Abraham, may still cheer the true servants of God under all difficulties.—'Fear not—I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.'

But there are perils on the right hand and on the left. It is not among the least, that though a pious clergyman may at first have tasted with trembling caution of the delicious cup of applause, he may gradually grow, as thirst is increased by indulgence, to drink too deeply of the enchanted chalice. The dangers arising from any thing that is good are formidable, because unsuspected. And such are the perils of popularity, that we will venture to say that the victorious general who has conquered a kingdom, or the sagacious statesman who has preserved it, is almost in less danger of being spoilt by acclamation than the popular preacher; because *their* danger is likely to happen but once, his is perpetual. Theirs is only on a day of triumph, his day of triumph occurs every week; we mean the admiration he excites. Every fresh success ought to be a fresh motive to humiliation; he who feels his danger will vigilantly guard against swallowing too greedily the indiscriminate, and often undistinguishing plaudits which his doctrines or his manner, his talent or his voice, may equally procure for him.

If he be not prudent as well as pious, he may be brought to humour his audience, and his audience to flatter him with a dangerous emulation, till they will scarcely endure truth itself from any other lips. Nay, he may imperceptibly be led not to be always satisfied with the attention and improvement of his hearers, unless the attention be sweetened by flattery, and the improvement followed by exclusive attachment.

The spirit of exclusive fondness generates a spirit of controversy. Some of the followers will rather improve in casuistry than in Christianity. They will be more busied in opposing Paul to Apollos, than looking unto 'Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith;' than in bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. Religious gossip may assume the place of religion itself. A party spirit is thus generated, and Christianity may begin to be considered as a thing to be discussed and disputed, to be heard and talked about, rather than as the productive principle of virtuous conduct.*

We owe, indeed, lively gratitude and affectionate attachment to the minister who has faithfully laboured for our edification; but the author has sometimes noticed a manner adopted by some injudicious adherents, especially of her own sex, which seems rather to erect their favourite into the head of a sect, than to reverence him as the pastor of a flock. This mode of evincing an attachment, amiable in itself, is doubtless as distressing to the delicacy of the minister as it is unfavourable to religion, to which it is apt to give an air of party.

May we be allowed to animadvert more immediately on the cause of declension in piety, in some persons who formerly exhibited evident marks of that seriousness in their lives which they continue to inculcate from the pulpit. If such has been sometimes (we hope it has been very rarely) the case, may it not be partly ascribed to an unhappy notion that the same exactness in his private devotion, the same watch-

* This polemic tattle is of a totally different character from that species of religious conversation recommended in the preceding chapter.

fulness in his daily conduct, is not equally necessary in the advanced progress as in the first stages of a religious course? He does not desist from warning his hearers of the continual necessity of these things, but is he not in some danger of not applying the necessity to himself May he not begin to rest satisfied with the inculcation without the practice? It is not probable indeed that he goes so far as to establish himself as an exempt case, but he slides from indolence into the exemption, as if its avoidance were not so necessary for him as for others.

Even the very sacredness of his profession is not without a snare. He may repeat the holy offices so often that he may be in danger on the one hand, of sinking into the notion that it is a mere profession, or on the other, of so resting in it as to make it supercede the necessity of that strict personal religion with which he set out: He may at least be satisfied with the occasional, without the uniform practice. There is a danger—we advert only to its possibility—that his very exactness in the public exercise of his function, may lead to a little justification of his remissness in secret duties. His zealous exposition of the Scriptures to others may satisfy him, though it does not always lead to a practical application of them to himself.

But God, by requiring exemplary diligence in the devotion of his appointed servants, would keep up in their minds a daily sense of their dependance on him. If he does not continually teach by his Spirit those who teach others, they have little reason to expect success, and that Spirit will not be given where it is not sought; or, which is an awful consideration, may be withdrawn, where it had been given, and not improved as it might have been.

Should this unhappily ever be the case, it would almost reduce the minister of Christ to a mere engine, a vehicle through which knowledge was barely to pass, like the ancient oracles who had nothing to do with the information but to convey it. Perhaps the public success of the best men has been, under God, principally owing to this, that their faithful ministration in the temple has been uniformly preceded and followed by petitions in the closet; that the truths implanted in the one, have chiefly flourished from having been watered by the tears, and nourished by the prayers of the other.

We will hazard but one more observation on this dangerous and delicate subject; in this superficial treatment of which, it is the thing in the world the most remote from the writer's wish, to give the slightest offence to any pious member of an order which possesses her highest veneration. If the indefatigable labourer in his great Master's vineyard, has, as must often be the case, the mortification of finding that his labours have failed of producing their desired effect, in some instance, where his warmest hopes had been excited;—if he feels that he has not benefitted others as he had earnestly desired, this is precisely the moment to benefit himself, and is perhaps permitted for that very end. Where his usefulness has been obviously great, the true Christian will be humbled by the recollection that he is only an instrument. Where it has been less, the defeat of his hopes offers the best occasion, which he will not fail to use for improving his humility. Thus he may always be assured that good has been done somewhere, so that in any case his labour will not have been vain in the Lord.

CHAP. XVII.

True and False Zeal.

It is one of the most important ends of cultivating that self-knowledge which we have elsewhere recommended, to discover what is the real bent of our mind, and which are the strongest tendencies of our character; to discover where our disposition requires restraint, and where we may be safely trusted with some liberty of indulgence. If the temper be fervid, and that fervour be happily directed to religion, the most consummate prudence will be requisite to restrain its excesses without freezing its energies.

If, on the contrary, timidity and diffidence be the natural propensity, we shall be in danger of falling into coldness and inactivity with regard to ourselves, and into too unresisting a compliance with the requisitions, or too easy a conformity with the habits of others. It will therefore be an evident proof of Christian self-government, when the man of too ardent zeal restrains its outward expression where it would be unseasonable, or unsafe; while it will evince the same Christian self-denial in the fearful and diffident character, to burst the fetters of timidity, where duty requires a holy boldness; and when he is called upon to lose all lesser fears in the fear of God.

It will then be one of the first objects of a Christian to get his understanding and his conscience thoroughly enlightened; to take an exact survey not only of the whole comprehensive scheme of Christianity, but of his own character; to discover, in order to correct the defects in his judgment, and to ascertain the deficiencies even of his best qualities. Through ignorance in these respects, though he may really be following up some good tendency, though he is even persuaded that he is not wrong either in his motive or his object, he may yet be wrong in the measure, wrong in the mode, wrong in the application, though right in the principle. He must therefore watch with a suspicious eye over his better qualities, and guard his very virtues from deviation and excess.

His zeal, that indispensable ingredient in the composition of a great character, that quality, without which no great eminence either secular or religious has ever been attained; which is essential to the acquisition of excellence in arts and arms, in learning and piety; that principle without which no man will be able to reach the perfection of his nature, or to animate others to aim at that perfection, will yet hardly fail to mislead the animated Christian, if his knowledge of what is right and just, if his judgment in the application of that knowledge do not keep pace with the principle itself.

Zeal, indeed, is not so much an individual virtue as the principle which gives life and colouring, as the spirit which gives grace and benignity, as the temper which gives warmth and energy to every other. It is that feeling which exalts the relish of every duty, and sheds a lustre on the practice of every virtue; which, embellishing every image of the mind with its glowing tints, animates every quality of the heart with its invigorating motion. It may be said of zeal among the virtues as of memory among the faculties, that though it singly never made a great man, yet no man has ever made himself conspicuously great where it has been wanting.

Many things however must concur before we can be allowed to determine whether zeal be really a virtue or a vice. Those who are contending for the one or the other, will be in the situation of the two knights, who meeting on a cross road, were on the point of fighting about the colour of a cross which was suspended between them. One insisted it was gold; the other maintained it was silver. The duel was prevented by the interference of a passenger, who desired them to change their positions. Both crossed over to the opposite side, found the cross was gold on one side, and silver on the other. Each acknowledged his opponent to be right.

It may be disputed whether fire be a good or an evil. The man who feels himself cheerful by its kindly warmth, is assured that it is a benefit, but he whose house it has just burnt down will give another verdict. Not only the cause, therefore, in which zeal is exerted must be good, but the principle itself must be under due regulation: or, like the rapidity of the traveller who gets into a wrong road, it will only carry him so much the further out of his way; or if he be in the right road, it will, through inattention, carry him involuntarily beyond his destined point.—That degree of motion is equally misleading which detains us short of our end, or which pushes us beyond it.

The apostle suggests a useful precaution by expressly asserting that it is 'in a good cause,' that we 'must be zealously affected;' which implies this further truth, that where the cause is not good, the mischief is proportioned to the zeal. But lest we should carry our limitations of the quality to any restriction of the seasons for exercising it, he takes care to animate us to its perpetual exercise, by adding that we must be *always* so affected.

If the injustice, the intolerance and persecution, with which a misguided zeal has so often afflicted the church of Christ, in its more early periods, be lamented as a deplorable evil; yet the overruling wisdom of Providence educing good from evil, made the very calamities which false zeal occasioned, the instruments of producing that true and lively zeal to which we owe the glorious band of martyrs and confessors, those brightest ornaments of the best periods of the church. This effect, though a clear vindication of that divine goodness which suffers evil, is no apology for him who perpetrates it.

It is curious to observe the contrary operations of true and false zeal, which though apparently only different modifications of the same quality, are, when brought into contact, repugnant, and even destructive to each other. There is no attribute of the human mind where the different effects of the same principle have such a total opposition: for is it not obvious that the same principle under another direction, which actuates the tyrant in dragging the martyr to the stake, enables the martyr to embrace it?

As a striking proof that the necessity for caution is not imaginary, it has been observed that the Holy Scriptures record more instances of a bad zeal than of a good one. This furnishes the most authoritative argument for regulating this impetuous principle, and for governing it by all those restrictions which a feeling so calculated for good and so capable of evil demands.

It was zeal, but of a blind and furious character, which produced the massacre on the day of St. Bartholomew;—a day to which the mournful strains of Job have been so well applied.—'Let that day perish. Let it not be joined to the days of the years. Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it.'—It was a zeal the most bloody, combined with a perfidy the most detestable, which inflamed the execrable Florentine,* when, having on this occasion invited so many illustrious protestants to Paris under the alluring mask of a public festivity, she contrived to involve her guest, the pious queen of Navarre, and the venerable Coligni in the general mass of undistinguished destruction. The royal and pontifical assassins not satisfied with the sin, converted it into a triumph.—Medals were struck in honour of a deed which has no parallel even in the annals of Pagan persecution.

Even glory did not content the pernicious plotters of this direful tragedy. Devotion was called in to be

> The crown and consummation of their crime.

The blackest hypocrisy was made use of to sanctify the foulest murder. The iniquity could not be complete without solemnly thanking God for its success. The pope and cardinals proceeded to St. Mark's church, where they praised the Almighty for so great a blessing conferred on the see of Rome, and the Christian world. A solemn jubilee completed the preposterous mummery.—This zeal of devotion was as much worse than even the zeal of murder, as thanking God for enabling us to commit a sin is worse than the commission itself. A wicked piety is still more disgusting than a wicked act. God is less offended by the sin itself than by the thank-offering of its perpetrators. It looks like a black attempt to involve the Creator in the crime.†

It was this exterminating zeal which made the fourteenth Louis, bad in the profligacy of his youth, worse in the superstition of his age, revoke the tolerating edict which might have drawn down a blessing on his kingdom. One species of crime was called on, in his days of blind devotion, to expiate another committed in his days of mad ambition.—But the expiation was even more intolerable than the offence. The havoc made by the sword of civil persecution

* Catharine de Medici.

† See Thuanus for a most affecting and exact account of this direful massacre.

was a miserable atonement for the blood which unjust aggression had shed in foreign wars.

It was this impious and cruel zeal which inspired the monk Dominick, in erecting the most infernal tribunal which ever inventive bigotry projected to dishonour the Christian name, and which with pertinacious barbarity has continued for above six centuries, to afflict the human race.

For a complete contrast to this pernicious zeal we need not, blessed be God, travel back into remote history, nor abroad into distant realms. This happy land of civil and religious liberty can furnish a countless catalogue of instances of a pure, a wise, and a well directed zeal. Not to swell the list, we will only mention that it has in our own age, produced the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Abolition of the African slave trade. Three as noble, and which will, we trust, be as lasting monuments as ever national virtue erected to true piety. These are institutions which bear the genuine stamp of Christianity, not originating in party, founded in disinterestedness, and comprehending the best interests of almost the whole habitable globe,—'without partiality and without hypocrisy.'

Why we hear so much in praise of zeal from a certain class of religious characters, is partly owing to their having taken up a notion, that its acquired exertions relate to the care of other people's salvation rather than to their own; and indeed the casual prying into a neighbour's house, though much more entertaining, is not near so troublesome as the constant inspection of one's own. It is observable that the outcry against zeal among the irreligious is raised on nearly the same ground, as the clamour in its favour by these professors of religion. The former suspect that the zeal of the religionist evaporates in censuring *their* impiety, and in eagerness for *their* conversion, instead of being directed to themselves. This supposed anxiety they resent, and give a practical proof of their resentment by resolving not to profit by it.

Two very erroneous opinions exist, respecting zeal. It is commonly supposed to indicate a want of charity, and the two principles are accused of maintaining separate interests. This is so far from being the case, that charity is the firm associate of that zeal of which it is supposed to be the enemy.—Indeed, this is so infallible a criterion by which to try its sincerity, that we should be apt to suspect the legitimacy of the zeal which is unaccompanied by this fair ally.

Another opinion equally erroneous is not a little prevalent—that where there is much zeal there is little or no prudence. Now a sound and sober zeal is not such an idiot as to neglect to provide for its own success; and would that success be provided for, without employing for its accomplishment, every precaution which prudence can suggest?—True zeal, therefore, will be as discreet as it is fervent, well knowing that its warmest efforts will be neither effectual, nor lasting, without those provisions which discretion alone can make. No quality is ever possessed in perfection where its opposite is wanting; zeal is not Christrian fervour, but animal heat, if not associated with charity and prudence.

Zeal indeed, like other good things, is frequently calumniated because it is not understood; and it may sometimes deserve censure, as being the effervescence of that weak but well meaning mind which will defeat the efforts not only of this, but of every other good propensity.

That most valuable faculty therefore of intellectual man, the judgment, the enlightened, impartial, unbiassed judgment, must be kept in perpetual activity, not only in order to ascertain that the cause be good, but to determine also the degree of its importance in any given case, that we may not blindly assign an undue value to an inferior good: for want of this discrimination we may be fighting a windmill, when we fancy we are attacking a fort. We must prove not only whether the thing contended for be right, but whether it be essential; whether in our eagerness to attain this subordinate good we may not be sacrificing, or neglecting, things of more real consequence. Whether the value we assign to it may not be even imaginary.

Above all, we should examine whether we do not contend for it chiefly because it happens to fall in with our own humour, or our own party, more than on account of its intrinsic worth; whether we do not wish to distinguish ourselves by our pertinacity, and to append ourselves to the party rather than to the principle; and thus, as popularity is often gained by the worst part of a man's character, whether we do not principally persist from the hope of becoming popular. The favourite adage that *le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*, might serve as an appropriate motto to one half of the contentions which divide and distract the world.

This zeal, hotly exercised for mere circumstantials, for ceremonies different in themselves, for distinctions rather than differences, has unhappily assisted in causing irreparable separations and dissentions in the Christian world, even where the champions on both sides were great and good men.—Many of the points which have been the sources of altercation were not worth insisting upon, where the opponents agreed in the grand fundamentals of faith and practice.

But to consider zeal as a general question, as a thing of every day experience. He whose piety is most sincere will be likely to be the most zealous. But though zeal is an indication, and even a concomitant of sincerity, a burning zeal is sometimes seen where the sincerity is somewhat questionable.

For where zeal is generated by ignorance it is commonly fostered by self-will. That which we have embraced through false judgment we maintain through false honour.—Pride is generally called in to nurse the offspring of error. It is from this confederacy that we frequently see those who are perversely zealous for points which can add nothing to the cause of Christian truth, whether they are rejected or retained, cold and indifferent about the great things which involve the salvation of man.

Though all momentous truths, all indispensable duties, are, in the luminous volume of inspi-

ration, made so obvious that those may read who run; the contested matters are not only so comparatively little as to be by no means worthy of the heat they excite, but are rendered so doubtful, not in themselves, but by the opposite systems built on them, that he who fights for them is not always sure whether he be right or not; and if he carry his point he can make no moral use of his victory. This indeed is not his concern. It is enough that he has conquered. The importance of the object having never depended on its worth, but on the opinion of his right to maintain that worth.

The Gospel assigns very different degrees of importance to allowed practices and commanded duties. It by no means censures those who were rigorous in their payment of the most inconsiderable tythes; but seeing this duty was not only put in competition with, but preferred before, the most important duties, even judgment, mercy and faith, the flagrant hypocrisy was pointedly censured by MEEKNESS itself.

This opposition of a scrupulous exactness in paying the petty demand on three paltry herbs, to the neglect of the three cardinal Christian virtues, exhibits as complete and instructive a specimen of that frivolous and false zeal which, evaporating in trifles, wholly overlooks those grand points on which hangs eternal life, as can be conceived.

This passage serves to corroborate a striking fact, that there is scarcely in scripture any precept enforced, which has not some actual exemplification attached to it. The historical parts of the Bible, therefore, are of inestimable value, were it only on this single ground, that the appended truths and principles so abundantly scattered through them, are in general so happily illustrated by them. They are not dry aphorisms and cold propositions, which stand singly, and disconnected, but truths suggested by the event, but precepts growing out of the occasion. The recollection of the principles recalls to the mind the instructive story which they enrich, while the remembrance of the circumstance impresses the sentiment upon the heart. Thus the doctrine, like a precious gem, is at once preserved and embellished by the narrative being made a frame in which to enshrine it.

True zeal will first exercise itself in earnest desires, in increasing ardour to obtain higher degrees of illumination in our own minds; in fervent prayer that this growing light may operate to the improvement of our practice, that the influences of divine grace may become more outwardly perceptible by the increasing correctness of our habits; that every holy affection may be followed by its correspondent act, whether of obedience or of resignation, of doing, or of suffering.

But the effects of a genuine and enlightened zeal will not stop here. It will be visible in our discourse with those to whom we may have a probability of being useful. But though we should not confine the exercise of our zeal to our conversation, nor our attention to the opinions and practices of others, yet this, when not done with a bustling kind of interference, and offensive forwardness, is proper and useful. It is indeed a natural effect of zeal to appear where it exists, as a fire which really burns will not be prevented from emitting both light and heat; yet we should labour principally to keep up in our own minds the pious feelings which religion has excited there. The brightest flame will decay if no means are used to keep it alive. Pure zeal will cherish every holy affection, and by increasing every pious disposition will animate us to every duty. It will add new force to our hatred of sin, fresh contrition to our repentance, additional vigour to our resolutions, and will impart augmented energy to every virtue It will give life to our devotions, and spirit to all our actions.

When a true zeal has fixed these right affections in our own hearts, the same principle will, as we have already observed, make us earnest to excite them in others. No good man wishes to go to heaven alone, and none ever wished others to go thither without earnestly endeavouring to awaken right affections in them. That will be a false zeal which does not begin with the regulation of our own hearts. That will be an illiberal zeal which stops where it begins. A true zeal will extend itself through the whole sphere of its possessor's influence Christian zeal, like Christian charity, will begin at home, but neither the one nor the other must end there.

But that we must not confine our zeal to mere conversation is not only implied but expressed in Scripture. The apostle does not exhort us to be zealous only of good *words* but of good *works*. True zeal ever produces true benevolence. It would extend the blessings which we ourselves enjoy, to the whole human race. It will consequently stir us up to exert all our influence to the extension of religion, to the advancement of every well concerted and well conducted plan, calculated to enlarge the limits of human happiness, and more especially to promote the eternal interests of human kind.

But if we do not first strenuously labour for our own illumination, how shall we presume to enlighten others! It is a dangerous presumption, to busy ourselves in improving others, before we have diligently sought our own improvement. Yet it is a vanity not uncommon that the first feelings, be they true or false, which resemble devotion, the first faint ray of knowledge which has imperfectly dawned, excites in certain raw minds an eager impatience to communicate to others what they themselves have not yet attained. Hence the novel swarms of uninstructed instructors, of teachers who have had no time to learn. The act previous to the imparting knowledge should seem to be that of acquiring it. Nothing would so effectually check an irregular and improve a temperate zeal, as the personal discipline, the self acquaintance we have so repeatedly recommended.

True Christian zeal will always be known by its distinguishing and inseparable properties. It will be warm, indeed, not from temperament but principle. It will be humble, or it will not be *Christian* zeal.—It will restrain its impetuosity that it may the more effectually promote its object.—It will be temperate, softening what is strong in the act by gentleness in the man

ner. It will be tolerating, willing to grant what it would itself desire.—It will be forbearing, in the hope that the offence it censures may be occasional failing and not a habit of the mind.—It will be candid, making a tender allowance for those imperfections which beings, fallible themselves ought to expect from human infirmity.—It will be reasonable—employing fair argument and affectionate remonstrance, instead of irritating by the adoption of violence, instead of mortifying by the assumption of superiority.

He, who in private society allows himself in violent anger or unhallowed bitterness, or acrimonious railing, in reprehending the faults of another, might, did his power keep pace with his inclination, have recourse to other weapons. He would probably banish and burn, confiscate and imprison, and think then as he thinks now, that he is doing God service.

If there be any quality which demands a clearer sight, a tighter rein, a stricter watchfulness than another, zeal is that quality. The heart where it is wanting has no elevation; where it is not guarded, no security. The prudence with which it is exercised is the surest evidence of its integrity; for if intemperate it not only raises enemies to ourselves but to God. It augments the natural enmity to religion instead of increasing her friends.

But if tempered by charity, if blended with benevolence, if sweetened by kindness, if evinced to be honest by its influence on your own conduct, and gentle by its effect on your manners, it may lead your irreligious acquaintance to inquire more closely in what consists the distinction between them and you. You will already by this mildness have won their affection. Your next step may be to gain over their judgment. They may be led to examine what solid grounds of difference subsists between you and them. What substantial reason you have for not going their lengths. What sound argument they can offer for not going yours.

But it may possibly be asked, after all, where do we perceive any symptoms of this inflammatory distemper? Should not the prevalence, or at least the existence of a disease be ascertained previous to the application of the remedy? That it exists is sufficiently obvious, though it must be confessed that among the higher ranks it has not hitherto spread very widely; nor is its progress likely to be very alarming, or its effects very malignant. It is to be lamented that in every rank, indeed, coldness and indifference, carelessness and neglect, are the reigning epidemics. These are diseases far more difficult to cure; diseases not more dangerous to the patient than distressing to the physician, who generally finds it more difficult to raise a sluggish habit than to lower an occasional heat. The imprudently zealous man, if he be sincere, may, by a discreet regimen, be brought to a state of complete sanity; but to rouse from a state of morbid indifference, to brace from a total relaxation of the system, must be the immediate work of the great Physician of souls; of him who can effect even this, by his Spirit accompanying this powerful word, 'Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.'

CHAP. XVIII.

Insensibility to Eternal Things.

INSENSIBILITY to eternal things, in beings who are standing on the brink of eternity, is a madness which would be reckoned among prodigies, if it were not so common. It would be altogether incredible, if the numberless instances we have of it were only related, and not witnessed, were only heard of, and not experienced.

If we had a certain prospect of a great estate, and a splendid mansion which we knew must be ours in a few days; and not only ours as a bequest, but an inheritance, not only as a possession, but a perpetuity; if, in the mean time, we rented, on a precarious lease, a paltry cottage in bad repair, ready to fall, and from which we knew we must at all events soon be turned out, depending on the proprietor's will, whether the ejectment might not be the next minute; would it argue wisdom or even common sense, totally to overlook our near and noble reversion, and to be so fondly attached to our falling tenement, as to spend great part of our time and thoughts in supporting its ruins by props, and concealing its decays by decorations? To be so absorbed in the little sordid pleasures of this frail abode, as not even to cultivate a taste for the delights of the mansion, where such treasures are laid up for us, and on the possession of which we fully reckon in spite of our neglect,—this is an excess of inconsideration, which must be seen to be credited.

It is a striking fact, that the acknowledged uncertainty of life drives worldly men to make sure of every thing depending on it, except their eternal concerns. It leads them to be regular in their accounts, and exact in their bargains. They are afraid of risking ever so little property, on so precarious a tenure as life, without ensuring a reversion. There are even some who speculate on the uncertainty of life as a trade. Strange, that this accurate calculation of the duration of life should not involve a serious attention to its end! Strange, that the critical annuitant should totally overlook his perpetuity! Strange, that in the prudent care not to risk a fraction of property, equal care should not be taken to risk eternal salvation!

We are not supposing flagitious characters, remarkable for any thing which the world calls wicked: we are not supposing their wealth obtained by injustice, or increased by oppression. We are only supposing a soul drawn aside from God, by the alluring baits of a world, which, like the treacherous love of Atalanta, causes him to lose the victory by throwing golden apples in his way. The shining baits are obtained, but the race is lost!

To worldly men of a graver cast, business may be as formidable an enemy as pleasure is to those of a lighter turn: business has so sober an air that it looks like virtue, and virtuous it certainly is, when carried on in a proper spirit, with due moderation, and in the fear of God. To have a lawful employment, and to pursue it with deligence, is not only right and honourable in itself, but is one of the best preservatives from temptation.*

* That accurate judge of human life, Dr. Johnson, has

When a man pleads in his favour, the diligence business demands, the self-denying practices it imposes, the patience, the regularity, the industry indispensable to its success; when he argues that these are habits of virtue, that they are a daily discipline to the moral man; and that the world could not subsist without business, he argues justly;—but when he forgets his interest in the eternal world, when he neglects to lay up a treasure in heaven, in order that he may augment a store which he does not want, and, perhaps, he does not intend to use, or uses to purposes merely secular, he is a bad calculator, of the relative value of things.

Business has an honourable aspect as being opposed to idleness, the most hopeless offspring of the whole progeny of sin. The man of business comparing himself with the man of dissipation, feels a fair and natural consciousness of his own value, and of the superiority of his own pursuits. But it is by comparison that we deceive ourselves to our ruin. Business, whether professional, commercial, or political, endangers minds of a better cast, minds which look down on pleasure as beneath a thinking being. But if business absorb the affections, if it swallow up time, to the neglect of eternity; if it generate a worldly spirit; if it cherish covetousness; if it engage the mind in long views, and ambitious pursuits, it may be as dangerous, as its more inconsiderate frivolous rival. The grand evil of both lies in the alienation of the heart from God. Nay, in one respect, the danger is greater to him who is the best employed. The man of pleasure, however thoughtless, can never make himself believe that he is doing right. The man plunged in the serious bustle of business, cannot easily persuade himself that he may be doing wrong. • •

Commutation, compensation and substitution, are the grand engines which WORLDLY RELIGION incessantly keeps in play. Her's is a life of barter, a state of spiritual traffic, so much indulgence for so many good works. The implication is, 'we have a rigorous master,' and it is but fair to indemnify ourselves for the severity of his requisitions; just as an overworked servant steals a holyday.—'These persons,' says an eminent writer,* 'maintain a *meum* and *tuum* with heaven itself.' The set bounds to God's prerogative, lest it should too much encroach on man's privilege.

We have elsewhere observed, that if we invite people to embrace religion on the mere mercenary ground of present pleasure, they will desert it as soon as they find themselves disappointed. Men are too ready to clamour for the pleasures of piety before they have, I dare not say entitled themselves to them, but put themselves into the way of receiving them. We should be angry at that servant, who made the receiving of his wages a preliminary to the performance of his work. This is not meant to establish the merit of the works, but the necessity of our seeking that transforming and purifying change which characterises the real Christian; instead of complaining that we do not possess those consolations, which can be consequent only on such a mutation of the mind.

But if men consider this world on the true scripture ground as a state of probation; if they consider religion as a school for happiness, indeed, but of which the consummation is only to be enjoyed in heaven, the Christian hope will support them; the Christian faith will strengthen them. They will serve diligently, wait patiently, love cordially, obey faithfully, and be steadfast under all trials, sustained by the cheering promise held out to him, 'who endures to the end.'

There are certain characters who seem to have a graduated scale of vices. Of this scale they keep clear of the lowest degrees, and to rise above the highest they are not ambitious, forgetful that the same principle which operates in the greater, operates also in the less. A life of incessant gratification does not alarm the conscience, yet it is equally unfavorable to religion, equally destructive of its principle, equally opposite to its spirit with more obvious vices.

These are the habits which, by relaxing the mind and dissolving the heart, particularly foster indifference to our spiritual state, and insensibility to the things of eternity. A life of voluptuousness, if it be not a life of actual sin, is a disqualification for holiness, for happiness, for heaven. It not only alienates the heart from God, but lays it open to every temptation to which natural temper may invite, or incidental circumstances allure. The worst passions lie dormant in hearts given up to selfish indulgences, always ready to start into action as occasion calls.

Voluptuousness and irreligion play into each other's hands: they are reciprocally cause and effect. The looseness of the principle confirms the carelessness of the conduct, while the negligent conduct in its own vindication shelters itself under the supposed security of unbelief. The instance of the rich man in the parable of Lazarus, strikingly illustrates this truth.

Whoever doubts that a life of sensuality is consistent with the most unfeeling barbarity to the wants and sufferings of others; whoever doubts that boundless expense and magnificence, the means of procuring which were wrung from the robbery and murder of a lacerated world, may not be associated with that robbery and murder,—let him turn to the gorgeous festivities and unparalleled pageantries of Versailles and Saint Cloud.—There the Imperial Harlequin, from acting the deepest and the longest tragedy that ever drew tears of blood from an audience composed of the whole civilized globe, by a sudden stroke of his magic wand, shifts the scene of this most preposterous pantomime:—

> Where moody madness laughing wild
> Amidst severest wo,

gloomily contemplates the incongruous spectacle, sees the records of the Tyburn Chronicle embellished with the wanton splendours of the Arabian tables; beholds

> Perverse all monstrous, all prodigious things;

beholds tyranny with his painted vizor of patriotism, and polygamy with her Janus face of

• often been heard by the writer of these pages to observe, that it was the greatest misfortune which could befal a man to have been bred to no profession, and pathetically to regret that this misfortune was his own.

* The learned and pious John Smith.

political conscience and counterfeit affection fill the fore ground; while sceptred parasites, and pinchbeck potentates, tricked on with the shining spoils of plundered empires, and decked with the pilfered crowns of deposed and exiled monarchs, fill and empty the changing scene, with 'exits and with entrances,' as fleeting and unsubstantial as the progeny of Banquo,—beholds inventive but fruitless art, solicitously decorate the ample stage to conceal the stains of blood—stains as indelible as those which the ambitious wife of the irresolute thane vainly strove to wash from her polluted hands; while in her sleeping delirium she continued to cry,

> Still here's the smell of blood;
> The perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten it.

But to return to the general question. Let us not inquire whether these unfeeling tempers and selfish habits offend society, and discredit us with the world; but whether they feed our corruptions and put us in a posture unfavourable to all interior improvement; whether they offend God and endanger the soul; whether the gratification of self is the life which the Redeemer taught or lived; whether sensuality is a suitable preparation for that state where God himself, who is a Spirit, will constitute all the happiness of spiritual beings.

But these are not the only, perhaps not the greatest dangers. The intellectual vices, the spiritual offences may destroy the soul without much injuring the credit. These have not, like voluptuousness, their seasons of alteration and repose. Here the principle is in continual operation. Envy has no interval. Ambition never cools. Pride never sleeps. The principle at least is always awake. An intemperate man is sometimes sober, but a proud man is never humble. Where vanity reigns, she reigns always. These interior sins are more difficult of extirpation, they are less easy of detection; more hard to come at; and, as the citadel holds out after the outworks are taken, these sins of the heart are the latest conquered in the moral warfare.

Here lies the distinction between the worldly and the religious man. It is alarm enough for the Christian that he feels any propensities to vice. Against these propensities he watches, strives and prays: and though he is thankful for the victory when he has resisted the temptation, he can feel no elation of heart while conscious of inward dispositions, which nothing but divine grace enables him to keep from breaking out in a flame. He feels that there is no way to obtain the pardon of sin but to leave off sinning: he feels that though repentance is not a Saviour, yet that there can be no salvation where there is no repentance. Above all, he knows that the promise of remission of sin by the death of Christ is the only solid ground of comfort. However correct his present life may be, the weight of past offences would hang so heavy on his conscience, that without the atoning blood of his Redeemer, despair of pardon for the past would leave him hopeless. He would continue to sin, as an extravagant bankrupt who can get no acquittal, would continue to be extravagant, because no present frugality could redeem his former debts.

It is sometimes pleaded that the labour attached to persons in high public stations and important employments, by leaving them no time, furnishes a reasonable excuse for the omission of their religious duties. These apologies are never offered for any such neglect in the poor man, though to him every day brings the inevitable return of his twelve hours' labour, without intermission and without mitigation.

But surely the more important the station, the higher and wider the sphere of action, the more imperious is the call for religion, not only in the way of example, but even in the way of success; if it be indeed granted that there is such a thing as divine influences, if it be allowed that God has a blessing to bestow. If the ordinary man who has only himself to govern, requires that aid, how urgent is *his* necessity who has to govern millions! What an awful idea, could we even suppose it realized, that the weight of a nation might rest on the head of him whose heart looks not up for a higher support!

Were we alluding to sovereigns, and not to statesmen, we need not look beyond the throne of Great Britain, for the instance of a monarch who has never made the cares attendant on a king, an excuse for neglecting his duty to the King of kings.

The politician, the warrior, and the orator, find it peculiarly hard to renounce in themselves that wisdom and strength, to which they believe that the rest of the world are looking up. The man of station or of genius, when invited to the self-denying duties of Christianity, as well as he who has 'great possessions,' goes away 'sorrowing.'

But to know that they must end, stamps vanity on all the glories of life; to know that they must end soon, stamps infatuation, not only on him who sacrifices his conscience for their acquisition, but on him who, though upright in the discharge of his duties, discharges them without any reference to God.—Would the conqueror or the orator reflect when the 'laurel crown is placed on his brow, how soon will it be followed by the cypress wreath,' it would lower the delirium of ambition; it would cool the intoxication of prosperity.

There is a general kind of belief in Christianity, prevalent among men of the world, which, by soothing the conscience, prevents self-inquiry. That the holy Scriptures contain the will of God, they do not question; that they contain the best system of morals, they frequently assert: but that they do not feel the necessity of acquiring a correct notion of the doctrines those Scriptures involve. The depravity of man, the atonement made by Christ, the assistance of the Holy Spirit—these they consider as the metaphysical part of religion, into which it is not of much importance to enter, and by a species of self-flattery, they satisfy themselves with an idea of acceptableness with their Maker, as a state to be attained without the humility, faith, and newness of life which they require, and which are indeed their proper concomitants.

A man absorbed in a multitude of secular concerns, decent but unawakened, listens with a kind of respectful insensibility, to the overtures of religion. He considers the church as venera-

ble from her antiquity, and important from her connexion with the state. No one is more alive to her political, nor more dead to her spiritual importance. He is anxious for her existence, but indifferent to her doctrines. These he considers as a general matter in which he has no individual concern. He considers religious observances as something decorous but unreal; as a grave custom made respectable by public usage, and long prescription. He admits that the poor, who have little to enjoy, and the idle who have little to do, cannot do better than make over to God that time which cannot be turned to a more profitable account. Religion, he thinks, may properly enough employ leisure, and occupy old age. But though both advance towards himself with no imperceptible step, he is still at a loss to determine the precise period when the leisure is sufficient, or the age enough advanced. It recedes as the destined season approaches. He continues to intend moving, but he continues to stand still.

Compare his drowsy Sabbaths with the animation of the days of business, you would not think it was the same man. The one are to be got over, the others are enjoyed. He goes from the dull decencies, the shadowy forms—for such they are to him, of public worship, to the solid realities of his worldly concerns, to the cheerful activities of secular life. These he considers as bounden, almost as exclusive duties. The others indeed may not be wrong, but these he is sure are right. The world is his element. Here he breathes freely his native air. Here he is substantially engaged. Here his whole mind is alive, his understanding broad awake, all his energies are in full play; his mind is all alacrity; his faculties are employed, his capacities are filled; here they have an object worthy of their widest expansion. Here his desires and affections are absorbed. The faint impression of the Sunday's sermon fades away, to be as faintly revived on the Sunday following, again to fade in the succeeding week. To the sermon he brings a formal ceremonious attendance; to the world, he brings all the heart, and soul, and mind, and strength. To the one he resorts in conformity to law and custom; to induce him to resort to the other, he wants no law, no sanction, no invitation, no argument. His will is of the party. His passions are volunteers. The invisible things of heaven are clouded in shadow, are lost in distance. The world is lord of the ascendant. Riches, honours, power fill his mind with brilliant images. They are present, they are certain, they are tangible. They assume form and bulk. In these therefore he cannot be mistaken; in the others he may. The eagerness of competition, the struggle for superiority, the perturbations of ambition, fill his mind with an emotion, his soul with an agitation, his affections with an interest, which, though very unlike happiness, he yet flatters himself is the road to it. This fictitious pleasure, this tumultuous feeling, produces at least that negative satisfaction of which he is constantly in search—it keeps him from himself.

Even in circumstances where there is no success to prevent a very tempting bait, the mere occupation, the crowd of objects, the succession of engagements, the mingling pursuits, the very tumult and hurry have their gratifications. The bustle gives false peace by leaving no leisure for reflection. He lays his conscience asleep with the 'flattering unction, of good intentions. He comforts himself with the credible pretence of want of time, and the vague resolution of giving up to God the dregs of that life, of the vigorous season of which he thinks the world more worthy. Thus commuting with his Maker, life wears away, its close draws near—and even the poor commutation which was promised is not made. The assigned hour of retreat either never arrives, or if it does arrive, sloth and sensuality are resorted to, as the fair reward of a life of labour and anxiety; and whether he dies in the protracted pursuit of wealth, or in the enjoyment of the luxuries it has earned, he dies in the trammels of the world.

If we do not cordially desire to be delivered from the dominion of these worldly tempers, it is because we do not believe in the condemnation annexed to their indulgence. We may indeed believe it as we believe any other general proposition, or any indifferent fact; but not as truth in which we have a personal concern; not as a danger which has any reference to *us*. We evince this practical unbelief in the most unequivocal way, by thinking so much more about the most frivolous concern in which we are assured we have an interest, than about this most important of all concerns.

Indifference to eternal things, instead of tranquilizing the mind, as it professes to do, is, when a thoughtful moment occurs, a fresh subject of uneasiness; because it adds to our peril the horror of not knowing it. If shutting our eyes to a danger would prevent it, to shut them would not only be a happiness but a duty; but to barter eternal safety for momentary ease, is a wretched compromise. To produce this delusion, mere inconsideration is as efficient a cause as the most prominent sin. The reason why we do not value eternal things is, because we do not think of them. The mind is so full of what is present, that it has no room to admit a thought of what is to come. Not only we do not give that attention to a never-dying soul which prudent men give to a common transaction, but we do not even think it worth the care which inconsiderate men give to an inconsiderable one. We complain that life is short, and yet throw away the best part of it, only making over to religion that portion which is good for nothing else; life would be long enough if we assigned its best period to its best purpose.

Say not that the requisitions of religion are severe, ask rather if they are necessary. If a thing must absolutely be done, if eternal misery will be incurred by not doing it, it is fruitless to inquire whether it be hard or easy. Inquire only whether it be indispensable, whether it be commanded, whether it be practicable. It is a well known axiom in science, that difficulties are of no weight against demonstrations. The duty on which our eternal state depends, is not a thing to be debated, but done. The duty which is too imperative to be evaded, too important to be neglected, is not to be argued about, but performed. To sin on quietly, because you do not

intend to sin always, is to live on a reversion which will probably never be yours.

It is folly to say that religion drives men to despair; when it only teaches them by a salutary fear to avoid destruction. The fear of God differs from all other fear, for it is accompanied with trust, and confidence, and love. 'Blessed is the man that feareth alway,' is no paradox to him who entertains this holy fear. It sets him above the fear of ordinary troubles. It fills his heart. He is not discomposed with those inferior apprehensions which unsettle the soul and unhinge the peace of worldly men. His mind is occupied with one grand concern, and is therefore less liable to be shaken than little minds which are filled with little things. Can that principle lead to despair, which proclaims the mercy of God in Christ Jesus to be greater than all the sins of all the men in the world?

If *despair* then prevent your return, add not to your list of offences that of doubting of the forgiveness which is sincerely implored. You have already wronged God in his holiness, wrong him not in his mercy. You may offend him more by despairing of his pardon than by all the sins which have made that pardon necessary. Repentance, if one may venture the bold remark, almost disarms God of the power to punish. Hear his style and title as proclaimed by himself;—'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty'—that is, those who by unrepented guilt exclude themselves from the offered mercy.

If infidelity or indifference, which is practical infidelity, keep you back, yet, as reasonable beings, ask yourselves a few short questions; 'For what end was I sent into the world? Is my soul immortal? Am I really placed here in a state of trial, or is this span my all? Is there an eternal state? If there be, will the use I make of this life decide on my condition in that? I know that there is death, but is there a judgment?'—

Rest not till you have cleared up, I do not say your own evidences for heaven;—you have much to do before you arrive at that stage—but whether there be any heaven? Ask yourself whether Christianity is not important enough to deserve being inquired into? Whether eternal life is not too valuable to be entirely overlooked? Whether eternal destruction, if a reality, is not worth avoiding?—If you make these interrogations sincerely, you will make them practically. They will lead you to examine your own personal interest in these things. Evils which are ruining us for want of attention to them, lessen, from the moment our attention to them begins. True or false, the question is worth settling. Vibrate then no longer between doubt and certainty. If the evidence be inadmissible, reject it. But if you can once ascertain these cardinal points, then throw away your time if you *can*, then trifle with eternity if you *dare*.*

It is one of the striking characters of the Omnipotent that 'he is strong and patient.' It is a standing evidence of his patience that 'he is provoked every day.' How beautifully do these characters reflect lustre on each other. If he were not strong, his patience would want its distinguishing perfection. If he were not patient, his strength would instantly crush those who provoke him, not sometimes, but often; not every year, but 'every day.'

Oh you, who have a long space given you for repentance; confess that the forbearance of God, when viewed as coupled with his strength, is his most astonishing attribute! Think of the companions of your early life; if not your associates in actual vice, if not your confederates in guilty pleasures, yet the sharers of your thoughtless meetings, of your convivial revelry, of your worldly schemes, of your ambitious projects—think how many of them have been cut off, perhaps without warning, probably without repentance.—*They* have been represented to their Judge; *their* doom, whatever it be, is irreversibly fixed; yours is mercifully suspended.—Adore the mercy: embrace the suspension.

Only suppose if they could be permitted to come back to this world, if they could be allowed another period of trial, how would they spend their restored life! How cordial would be their penitence, how intense their devotion, how profound their humility, how holy their actions! Think then that you have still in your power that for which they would give millions of worlds. 'Hell,' says a pious writer, 'is truth seen too late.'

In almost every mind there sometimes float indefinite and general purposes of repentance. The operation of these purposes is often repelled by a real though disavowed scepticism. 'Because sentence is not executed speedily,' they suspect it has never been pronounced. They therefore think they may safely continue to defer their intended but unshapen purpose.—Though they sometimes visit the sick bed of others; though they see how much disease disqualifies for all duties, yet to this period of incapacity, to this moment of disqualification do they continue to defer this tremendously important concern.

What an image of the divine condescension does it convey, that 'the goodness of God leadeth to repentance!' It does not barely invite, but it conducts. Every warning is more or less an invitation; every visitation is a lighter stroke to avert a heavier blow. This was the way in which the heathen world understood portents and prodigies, and on this interpretation of them they acted. Any alarming warning, whether rational or superstitious, drove them to their temples, their sacrifices, their expiations. Does our

* An awakening call to public and individual feelings has been recently made, by an observation of an eloquent speaker in the house of commons. He remarked that himself and the honourable member for Yorkshire, then sitting on a committee appointed on occasion of a great national calamity, were the only surviving members of the committee on a similar occasion twenty-two years ago! The call is the more alarming, because the mortality did not arise from some extraordinary cause, which might not again occur, but was in the common course of human things. Such a proportion of deaths is perpetually taking place, but the very frequency which ought to excite attention prevents it, till it is thus forced on our notice.

clearer light always carry us farther? Does it in these instances, always carry us as far as natural conscience carried them?

The final period of the worldly man at length arrives; but he will not believe his danger. Even if he fearfully glance round for an intimation of it in every surrounding face, every face, it is too probable, is in a league to deceive him. What a noble opportunity is now offered to the Christian physician to show a kindness as far superior to any he has ever shown, as the concerns of the soul are superior to those of the body? Oh let him not fear *prudently* to reveal a truth for which the patient may bless him in eternity! Is it not sometimes to be feared that in the hope of prolonging for a little while the existence of the perishing body, he robs the never-dying soul of its last chance of pardon? Does not the concern for the immortal part united with his care of the afflicted body, bring the medical professor to a nearer imitation than any other supposable situation can do, of that Divine Physician, who never healed the one without manifesting a tender concern for the other?

But the deceit is short, is fruitless. The amazed spirit is about to dislodge. Who shall speak its terror and dismay? Then he cries out in the bitterness of his soul, 'What capacity has a diseased man, what time has a dying man, what disposition has a sinful man to acquire good principles, to unlearn false notions, to renounce bad practices, to establish right habits, to begin to love God, to begin to hate sin? How is the stupendous concern of salvation to be worked out by a mind incompetent to the most ordinary concerns.

The infinite importance of what he has to do —the goading conviction that it must be done— the utter inability of doing it—the dreadful combination in his mind of both the necessity and incapacity—the despair of crowding the concerns of an age into a moment—the impossibility of beginning a repentance which should have been completed—of setting about a peace which should have been concluded—of suing for a pardon which should have been obtained;—all these complicated concerns—without strength, without time, without hope, with a clouded memory, a disjointed reason, a wounded spirit, undefined terrors, remembered sins, anticipated punishment, an angry God, and accusing conscience, altogether, intolerably augment the sufferings of a body which stands in little need of the insupportable burthen of a distracted mind to aggravate its torments.

Though we pity the superstitious weakness of the German emperor in acting over the anticipated solemnities of his own funeral—that eccentric act of penitence of a great but perverted mind; it would be well if we were now and then to represent to our minds while in sound health, the solemn certainties of a dying bed; if we were sometimes to imagine to ourselves this awful scene, not only as inevitable, but as near; if we accustomed ourselves to see things now, as we shall then wish we had seen them. Surely the most sluggish insensibility must be roused by figuring to itself the rapid approach of death, the nearness of our unalterable doom, our instant transition to that state of unutterable bliss or unimaginable wo to which death will in a moment consign us. Such a mental representation would assist us in dissipating the illusion of the senses, would help to realise what is invisible, and approximate what we think remote. It would disenchant us from the world, tear off her painted mask, shrink her pleasures into their proper dimensions, her concerns into their real value, her enjoyments into their just compass, her promises into nothing.

Terrible as the evil is, if it must, and that at no distant day, be met, spare not to present it to your imagination; not to lacerate your feelings, but to arm your resolution; not to excite unprofitable distress, but to strengthen your faith. If it terrify you at first, draw a little nearer to it every time. Familiarity will abate the terror. If you cannot face the image, how will you encounter the reality?

Let us then figure to ourselves the moment (who can say that moment may not be the next?) when all we cling to shall elude our grasp; when every earthly good shall be to us as if it had never been, except in the remembrance of the use we have made of it; when our eyes shall close upon a world of sense, and open on a world of spirits; when there shall be no relief for the fainting body, and no refuge for the parting soul, except that single refuge to which, perhaps, we have never thought of resorting—that refuge which if we have not despised we have too probably neglected—the everlasting mercies of God in Christ Jesus.

Reader! whoever you are, who have neglected to remember that to die is the end for which you were born, know that you have a personal interest in this scene. Turn not away from it in disdain, however feebly it may have been represented. You may escape any other evil of life, but its end you cannot escape. Defer not then its weightiest concern to its weakest period. Begin not the preparation when you should be completing the work. Delay not the business which demands your best faculties to the period of their debility, probably of their extinction. Leave not the work which requires an age to do, to be done in a moment, a moment too which may not be granted. The alternative is tremendous. The difference is that of being saved or lost. It is no light thing to perish!

CHAP. XIX.

Happy Deaths.

Few circumstances contribute more fatally to confirm in worldly men that insensibility to eternal things which was considered in the preceding chapter, than the boastful accounts we sometimes hear of the firm and heroic deathbeds of popular but irreligious characters. Many causes contribute to these *happy deaths* as they are called. The blind are bold, they do not see the precipice they despise.—Or perhaps there is less unwillingness to quit a world which has so often disappointed them, or which they have

sucked to the last dregs. They leave life with less reluctance, feeling that they have exhausted all its gratifications.—Or it is a disbelief of the reality of the state on which they are about to enter.—Or it is a desire to be released from excessive pain, a desire naturally felt by those who calculate their gain rather by what they are escaping from, than by what they are to receive.—Or it is equability of temper, or firmness of nerve, or hardness of mind.—Or it is the arrogant wish to make the last act of life confirm its preceding professions.—Or it is the vanity of perpetuating their philosophic character.—Or if some faint ray of light break in, it is the pride of not retracting the sentiments which from pride they have maintained;—The desire of posthumous renown among their own party; the hope to make their disciples stand firm by their example; the ambition to give their last possible blow to revelation—or perhaps the fear of expressing doubts which might beget a suspicion that their disbelief was not so sturdy as they would have it thought. Above all, may they not, as a punishment for their long neglect of the warning voice of truth, be given up to a strong delusion to believe the lie they have so often propagated, and really to expect to find in death that eternal sleep, with which they have affected to quiet their own consciences, and have really weakened the faith of others?

Every new instance is an additional buttress on which the sceptical school lean for support, and which they produce as a fresh triumph. With equal satisfaction they collect stories of infirmity, depression, and want of courage in the dying hour of religious men, whom the nature of the disease, timorousness of spirit, profound humility, the sad remembrance of sin, though long repented of and forgiven, a deep sense of the awfulness of meeting God in judgment;—whom some or all of these causes may occasion to depart in trembling fear: in whom, though heaviness may endure through the night of death, yet joy cometh in the morning of the resurrection.

It is a maxim of the civil law that definitions are hazardous. And it cannot be denied that various descriptions of persons have hazarded much in their definitions of a *happy death*. A very able and justly admired writer, who has distinguished himself by the most valuable works on political economy, has recorded as proofs of the happy death of a no less celebrated contemporary, that he cheerfully amused himself in his last hours with *Lucian, a game of whist*, and some good humoured drollery upon *Charon* and his boat.

But may we not venture to say, with 'one of the people called Christians,'* himself a wit and philosopher, though of the school of Christ, that the man who could meet death in such a frame of mind, 'might smile over Babylon in ruins, esteem the earthquake which destroyed Lisbon an agreeable occurrence, and congratulate the hardened Pharaoh on his overthrow in the Red Sea.'

This eminent historian and philosoper, whose great intellectual powers it is as impossible not to admire, as not to lament their unhappy misapplication, has been eulogized by his friend, as coming nearer than almost any other man, to the perfection of human nature in his life; and has been almost deified for the cool courage and heroic firmness with which he met death. His eloquent panegyrist, with as insidious an inuendo as has ever been thrown out against revealed religion, goes on to observe, that 'perhaps it is one of the very worst circumstances against Christianity, that very few of its professors were ever either so moral, so humane, or could so philosophically govern their passions, as the sceptical David Hume.'

Yet notwithstanding this rich embalming of so noble a compound of 'matter and motion,' we must be permitted to doubt one of the two things presented for our admiration; we must either doubt the so much boasted happiness of his death, or the so much extolled humanity of his heart. We must be permitted to suspect the soundness of that benevolence which led *him* to devote his latest hours to prepare, under the label of *an Essay on Suicide*, a potion for posterity of so deleterious a quality, that if taken by the patient, under all the circumstances in which he undertakes to prove it innocent, might have gone near to effect the extinction of the whole human race. For if all rational beings, according to this posthumous prescription, are at liberty to procure their own release from life, 'under pain or sickness, shame or poverty,' how large a portion of the world would be authorized to quit it uncalled! For how many are subject to the two latter grievances; from the two former how few are altogether exempt!*

The energy of that ambition which could concentrate the last efforts of a powerful mind, the last exertions of a spirit greedy of fame, into a project not only for destroying the souls, but for abridging the lives of his fellow creatures, leaves at a disgraceful distance the inverted thirst of glory of the man, who to immortalize his own name, set fire to the Temple at Ephesus. Such a burning zeal to annihilate the eternal hope of his fellow creatures might be philosophy; but surely to authorise them to curtail their moral existence, which to the infidel who looks for no other, must be invaluable, was not philanthropy.

But if this death was thought worthy of being blazoned to the public eye in all the warm and glowing colours with which affection decorates panegyric; the disciples of the same school have been in general, anxiously solicitous to produce only the more creditable instances of invincible hardness of heart, while they have laboured to cast an impenetrable veil over the closing scene of those among the less inflexible of the fraternity, who have established in their departing moments, any symptoms of doubt, any indica-

* The late excellent Bishop Horne. See his letters to Dr Adam Smith.

* Another part of the *Essay on Suicide*, has this passage,—'Whenever pain or sorrow so far overcome my patience, as to make me tired of life, I may conclude that I am recalled from my station in the plainest and most express terms.' And again—'When I fall upon my own sword, I receive my death equally from the hands of the Deity, as if it had proceeded from a lion, a precipice, or a fever.' And again—'Where is the crime of turning a few ounces of blood from their natural channel.'

tions of distrust, respecting the validity of their principles:—Principles which they had long maintained with so much zeal, and disseminated with so much industry.

In spite of the sedulous anxiety of his satellites to conceal the clouded setting of the great luminary of modern infidelity, from which so many minor stars have filled their little urns, and then set up for original lights themselves; in spite of the pains taken—for we must drop metaphor—to shroud from all eyes, except those of the initiated, the terror and dismay with which the Philosopher of Geneva met death, met his summons to appear before that God whose providence he had ridiculed, that Saviour whose character and offices he had vilified,—the secret was betrayed. In spite of the precautions taken by his associates to bury in congenial darkness the agonies which in his last hours contradicted the audacious blasphemies of a laborious life spent in their propagation, at last like his great instigator, he *believed and trembled.*

Whatever the sage of Ferney might be in the eyes of Journalists, of Academicians, of Encyclopœdists, of the Royal Author of Berlin, of Revolutionists in the egg of his own hatching, of full grown infidels of his own spawning; of a world into which he had been for more than half a century industriously infusing a venom, the effects of which will be long felt, the expiring philosopher was no object of veneration to his NURSE.—She could have recorded 'a tale to harrow up the soul,' the horrors of which were sedulously attempted to be consigned to oblivion. But for this woman and a few other unbribed witnesses, his friends would probably have endeavoured to edify the world with this addition to the brilliant catalogue of *happy deaths.**

It has been a not uncommon opinion that the works of an able and truly pious Christian, by their happy tendency to awaken the careless and to convince the unbelieving, may, even for ages after the excellent author is entered into his eternal rest, by the accession of new converts which they bring to Christianity, continue to add increasing brightness to the crown of the already glorified saint. If this be true, how shall imagination presume to conceive, much less how shall language express, what must be expected in the contrary case? How shall we dare turn our thoughts to the progressive torments which may be ever heaping on the heads of those unhappy men of genius who have devoted their rare talents to promote vice and infidelity, continue with fatal success to make successive proselytes through successive ages—if their works last so long, and thus accumulate on themselves anguish ever growing miseries ever multiplying, without hope of any mitigation, without hope of any end!

A more recent instance of the temper and spirit which the College of Infidelity exhibits on these occasions is perhaps less generally known. A person of our own time and country, of high rank and talents, and who ably filled a great public situation, had unhappily in early life, imbibed principles and habits analogous to those of a notoriously profligate society of which he was a member, a society, of which the very appellation it delighted to distinguish itself by, is

Offence and torture to the sober ear.

In the near view of death, at an advanced age, deep remorse and terror took possession of his soul; but he had no friend about him to whom he could communicate the state of his mind, or from whom he could derive either counsel or consolation. One day in the absence of his attendants he raised his exhausted body on his dying bed, and threw himself on the floor, where he was found in great agony of spirit, with a prayer-book in his hand. This detection was at once a subject for ridicule and regret to his colleagues, and he was contemptuously spoken of as a pusillanimous deserter from the *good cause.* The phrase used by them to express their displeasure at his apostacy is too offensive to find a place here.* Were we called upon to decide between the two rival horrors, we should feel no hesitation in pronouncing this death a less unhappy one than those to which we have before alluded.

Another well known sceptic, while in perfect health, took measures by a special order, to guard against any intrusion in his last sickness, by which he might, even in the event of delirium, betray any doubtful apprehension that there might be any hereafter; or in any other way be surprised in uttering expressions of terror, and thus exposing the state of his mind, in case any such revolution should take place, which his heart whispered him might possibly happen.

But not only in those *happy deaths* which close a life of avowed impiety, is there great room for suspicion, but even in cases where without acknowledged infidelity, there has been a careless life; when in such cases we hear of a sudden death-bed revolution, of much seeming contrition, succeeded by extraordinary professions of joy and triumph, we should be very cautious of pronouncing on their real state. Let us rather leave the penitent of a day to that mercy against which he has been sinning through a whole life. These 'Clinical Converts,' (to borrow a favourite phrase of the eloquent bishop Taylor,) may indeed be true penitents; but how shall we pronounce them to be so?—How can we conclude that 'they are dead unto sin' unless they are spared to 'live unto righteousness?'

* It is a well attested fact, that this woman, after his decease, being sent for to attend another person in dying circumstances, anxiously inquired if the patient was a gentleman; for that she had recently been so dreadfully terrified in witnessing the dying horrors of Mons. de Voltaire, which surpassed all description, that she had resolved never to attend any other person of that sex unless she could be assured that he was not a philosopher. Voltaire, indeed, as he was deficient in the moral honesty and the other good qualities, which obtained for Mr Hume the affection of his friends, wanted his sincerity. Of all his other vices, hypocrisy was the consummation. While he daily dishonoured the Redeemer by the invention of unheard of blasphemies: after he had bound himself by a solemn pledge never to rest till he had exterminated his very name from the face of the earth, he was not ashamed to assist regularly at the awful commemoration of his death at the altar!

* The writer had this anecdote from an acquaintance of the noble person at the time of his death.

Happily we are not called upon to decide. He to whose broad eye the future and the past lie open, as he has been their constant witness, so will he be their unerring judge.*

But the admirers of certain *happy deaths*, do not even pretend that any such change appeared in the friends of whom they make not so much the panegyric as the apotheosis. They would even think repentance a derogation from the dignity of their character. They pronounce them to have been good enough as they were; insisting that they have a *demand* for happiness upon God, if there be any such Being; a *claim* upon heaven, if there be any such place. They are satisfied that their friend, after a life spent 'without God in the world,' without evidencing any marks of a changed heart, without even affecting any thing like repentance, without intimating that there was any call for it, DIED PRONOUNCING HIMSELF HAPPY.

But nothing is more suspicious than a *happy death*, where there has neither been religion in the life nor humility in its close, where its course has been without piety, and its termination without repentance.

Others in a still bolder strain, disdaining the posthumous renown to be conferred by survivors, of their *having* died happily, prudently secure their own fame, and changing both the tense and the person usual in monumental inscriptions, with prophetic confidence record on their own sepulchral marble, that they *shall* die not only 'HAPPY,' but 'GRATEFUL,'—the prescience of philosophy thus assuming as certain what the humble spirit of Christianity only presumes to hope.

There is another reason to be assigned for the charitable error of indiscriminately consigning our departed acquaintance to certain happiness. Affliction, as it is a tender, so it is a misleading feeling; especially in minds naturally soft, and but slightly tinctured with religion. The death of a friend awakens the kindest feelings of the heart. But by exciting true sorrow, it often excites false charity. Grief naturally softens every fault, love as naturally heightens every virtue. It is right and kind to consign error to oblivion, but not to immortality. Charity indeed we owe to the dead as well as to the living, but not that erroneous charity by which truth is violated, and undeserved commendation lavished on those whom truth could no longer injure. To calumniate the dead is even worse than to violate the rights of sepulture; not to vindicate calumniated worth, when it can no longer vindicate itself, is a crime next to that of attacking it;† but on the dead, charity, though well understood, is often mistakingly exercised.

If we were called upon to collect the greatest quantity of hyperbole—falsehood might be too harsh a term—in the least given time and space, we should do well to search for it in those sacred edifices expressly consecrated to truth. There we should see the ample mass of canonizing kindness which fills their mural decorations, expressed in all those flattering records inscribed by every variety of motive to every variety of claim. In addition to what is dedicated to real merit by real sorrow, we should hear of tears which were never shed, grief which was never felt, praise which was never earned; we should see what is raised by the decent demands of connexion, by tender, but undiscerning friendship, by poetic licence, by eloquent gratitude for testamentary favours.

It is an amiable though not a correct feeling in human nature, that, fancying we have not done justice to certain characters during their lives, we run into the error of supposed compensation by over estimating them after their decease.

On account of neighbourhood, affinity, long acquaintance, or some pleasing qualities, we may have entertained a kindness for many persons, of whose state however, while they lived, we could not with the utmost stretch of charity think favourably. If their sickness has been long and severe, our compassion having been kept by that circumstance in a state of continued excitement, though we lament their death, yet we feel thankful that their suffering is at an end. Forgetting our former opinion, and the course of life on which it was framed, we fall into all the common-place of consolation,—'God is merciful—we trust that they are at rest—what a happy release they have had!'—Nay, it is well if we do not go so far as to entertain a kind of vague belief that their better qualities joined to their sufferings have, on the whole, ensured their felicity.

Thus at once losing sight of that word of God which cannot lie, of our former regrets on their subject, losing the remembrance of their defective principles and thoughtless conduct; without any reasonable ground for altering our opinion, any pretence for entertaining a better hope—we assume that they are happy. We reason as if we believed that the suffering of the body had purchased the salvation of the soul, as if it had rendered any doubt almost criminal. We seem

* The primitive church carried their incredulity of the appearances of repentance so far as to require not only years of sorrow for sin, but perseverance in piety, before they would admit offenders to their communion; and as a test of their sincerity, required the uniform practice of those virtues most opposite to their former vices. Were this made the criterion now, we should not so often hear such flaming accounts of converts, so exultingly reported, before time has been allowed to try their stability. More especially we should not hear of so many triumphant relations of death-bed converts, in whom the symptoms must frequently be too equivocal to admit the positive decision of human wisdom.

† What a generous instance of that disinterested attachment which survives the grave of its object and piously rescues his reputation from the assaults of malignity, was given by the late excellent bishop Porteus, in his animated defence of archbishop Secker! May his own fair fame never stand in need of any such warm vindication, which, however, it could not fail to find in the bosom of every good man!—The fine talents of this lamented prelate, uniformly devoted to the purposes for which God gave them—his life directed to those duties to which his high professional station called him—his Christian graces—those engaging manners which shed a soft lustre on the firm fidelity of his friendships—that kindness which was ever flowing from his heart to his lips—the benignity and candour which distinguished not his conversation only, but his conduct—these and all those amiable qualities, that gentle temper and correct cheerfulness with which he adorned society, will ever endear his memory to all who knew him intimately; and let his friends remember, that to imitate his virtues, will be the best proof of their remembering them

to make ourselves easy on the falsest ground imaginable, not because we believe their hearts were changed, but because they are now beyond all possibility of change.

But surely the mere circumstance of death will not have rendered them fit for that heaven for which we before feared they were unfit. Far be it from us, indeed, blind and sinful as we are, to pass sentence upon *them*, to pass sentence upon *any*. We dare not venture to pronounce what may have passed between God and their souls, even at the last hour. We know that infinite mercy is not restricted to times or seasons; to an early or a late repentance: we know not but in that little interval their peace was made, their pardon granted, through the atoning blood, and powerful intercession of their Redeemer. Nor should we too scrupulously pry into the state of others, never, indeed, except to benefit them or ourselves; we should rather imitate the example of Christ, who at once gave an admirable lesson of meekness and charitable judgment, when avoiding an answer which might have led to fruitless discussion, he gave a reproof under the shape of an exhortation. In reply to the inquiry, 'Are there few that be saved,' he thus checked vain curiosity—'Strive (you) to enter in at the strait gate.' On another occasion, in the same spirit, he corrected inquisitiveness, not by an answer, but by an interrogation and a precept—'What is that to thee? Follow thou me.'

But where there is strong ground to apprehend that the contrary may have been the case, it is very dangerous to pronounce peremptorily on the safety of the dead. Because if we allow ourselves to be fully persuaded that they are entered upon a state of happiness, it will naturally and fatally tempt us to lower our own standard. If we are ready to conclude that *they* are now in a state of glory whose principles we believed to be incorrect, whose practice, to say the least of it, we know to have been negligent, who, without our indulging a censorious or a presumptuous spirit, we thought lived in a state of mind, and a course of habits, not only far from right, but even avowedly inferior to our own; will not this lead to the conclusion, either that we ourselves, standing on so much higher ground, are in a very advanced state of grace, or that a much lower than ours may be a state of safety? And will not such a belief tend to slacken our endeavours, and to lower our tone, both of faith and practice?

By this conclusion we contradict the affecting assertion of a very sublime poet,

> For us they sicken and for us they die.

For while we are thus taking and giving false comfort, our friend as to us will have died in vain. Instead of his death having operated as a warning voice, to rouse us to a more animated piety, it will be rather likely to lull us into a dangerous security. If our affection has so blinded our judgment, we shall by a false candour to another, sink into a false peace ourselves.

It will be a wounding circumstance to the feelings of surviving friendship, to see a person of loose habits, whom though we love, yet we feared to admonish, and that because we loved him; for whom, though we saw his danger, yet perhaps we neglected to pray; to see him brought to that ultimate and fixed state in which admonition is impossible, in which prayer is not only fruitless, but unlawful.

Another distressing circumstance frequently occurs. We meet with affectionate but irreligious parents, who though kind and perhaps amiable, have neither lived themselves, nor educated their families in Christian principles, nor in habits of Christian piety. A child at the age of maturity dies. Deep is the affliction of the doting parent. The world is a blank. He looks round for comfort where he has been accustomed to look for it among his friends. He finds it not. He looks up for it where he has not been accustomed to seek it. Neither his heart nor his treasure has been laid up in heaven. Yet a paroxysm, of what may be termed natural devotion, gives to his grief an air of piety. The first cry of anguish is commonly religious.

The lamented object perhaps, through utter ignorance of the awful gulf which was opening to receive him, added to a tranquil temper, might have expired without evincing any great distress, and his *happy death* is industriously proclaimed through the neighbourhood, and the mourning parents have only to wish that their latter end may be like his. They cheat at once their sorrow and their souls, with the soothing notion that they shall soon meet their beloved child in Heaven. Of this they persuade themselves as firmly and as fondly, as if both they and the object of their grief had been living in the way which leads thither. Oh, for that unbought treasure, a sincere, a real friend, who might lay hold on the propitious moment! When the heart is softened by sorrow, it might possibly, if ever, be led to its true remedy. This would indeed be a more unequivocal, because more painful act of friendship than pouring in the lulling opiate of false consolation, which we are too ready to administer, because it saves our own feelings, while it sooths, without healing, those of the mourner.

But perhaps the integrity of the friend conquers his timidity. Alas! he is honestly explicit to unattending or to offended ears. They refuse to hear the voice of the charmer. But if the mourners will not endure the voice of exhortation now, while there is hope, how will they endure the sound of the last trumpet when hope is at an end? If they will not bear the gentle whisper of friendship, how will they bear the voice of the accusing angel, the terrible sentence of the incensed Judge? If private reproof be intolerable, how will they stand the being made a spectacle to angels and to men, even to the whole assembled universe, to the whole creation of God?

But instead of converting the friendly warning to their eternal benefit, they are probably wholly bent on their own vindication. Still their character is dearer to them than their soul. 'We never,' say they, 'were any man's enemy.' Yes—you have been the enemy of all to whom you have given a bad example. You have especially been the enemy to your children in whom

you have implanted no christian principles. Still they insist with the prophet that 'there is no iniquity in them that can be called iniquity.' 'We have wronged no one,' say they, 'we have given to every one his due. We have done our duty.' Your first duty was to God. You have robbed your Maker of the service due to Him. You have robbed your Redeemer of the souls he died to save. You have robbed your own soul and too probably the souls of those whom you have so wretchedly educated, of eternal happiness.

Thus the flashes of religion which darted in upon their conscience in the first burst of sorrow, too frequently die away; they expire before the grief which kindled them. They resort again to their old resource, the world, which if it cannot soon heal their sorrow, at least soon diverts it.

To shut our eyes upon death as an object of terror or of hope, and to consider it only as a release or an extinction, is viewing it under a character which is not its own. But to get rid of the idea at any rate, and then boast that we do not fear the thing we do not think of is not difficult. Nor is it difficult to think of it without alarm if we do not include its consequences. But to him who frequently repeats, not mechanically, but devoutly, 'we know that THOU shalt come to be our Judge,' death cannot be a matter of indifference.

Another cause of these *happy deaths* is that many think salvation a slight thing, that heaven is cheaply obtained, that a merciful God is easily pleased, that we are Christians, and that mercy comes of course to those who have always professed to believe that Christ died to purchase it for them. This notion of God being more merciful than he has any where declared himself to be, instead of inspiring them with more gratitude to him, inspires more confidence in themselves. This corrupt faith generates a corrupt morality. It leads to this strange consequence, not to make them love God better, but to venture on offending him more.

People talk as if the act of death made a complete change in the nature, as well as in the condition of man. Death is the vehicle to another state of being, but possesses no power to qualify us for that state. In conveying us to a new world it does not give us a new heart. It puts the unalterable stamp of decision on the character, but does not transform it into a character diametrically opposite.

Our affections themselves will be rather raised than altered. Their tendencies will be the same, though their advancement will be incomparably higher. They will be exalted in their degree, but not changed in their nature. They will be purified from all earthly mixtures, cleansed from all human pollutions, the principle will be cleared from its imperfections, but it will not become another principle. He that is unholy will not be made holy by death. The heart will not have a new object to seek, but will be directed more intensely to the same object.

They who love God here will love him far more in heaven, because they will know him far better. There he will reign without a competitor. They who served him here in sincerity will there serve him in perfection. If 'the pure in heart shall see God,' let us remember that this purity is not to be contracted after we have been admitted to its remuneration. The beatitude is pledged as a reward for the purity, not as a qualification for it. Purity will be sublimated in heaven, but will not begin to be produced there. It is to be acquired by passing through the refiner's fire here, not through the penal and expiatory fire which human ingenuity devised to purge offending man

From the foul deeds done in his days of nature.

The extricated spirit will be separated from the feculence of all that belongs to sin, to sense, to self. We shall indeed find ourselves new, because spiritualized beings; but if the cast of the mind were not in a great measure the same, how should we retain our identity? The soul will there become that which it here desired to be, that which it mourned because it was so far from being. It will have obtained that complete victory over its corruptions which it here only desired, which it here only struggled to obtain.

Here our love of spiritual things is superinduced, there it will be our natural frame. The impression of God on our hearts will be stamped deeper, but it will not be a different impression. Our obedience will be more voluntary, because there will be no rival propensities to obstruct it. It will be more entire, because it will have to struggle with no counteracting force.—Here we sincerely though imperfectly love the law of God, even though it controuls our perverse will, though it contradicts our corruptions. There our love will be complete, because our will will retain no perverseness, and our corruptions will be done away.

Repentance, precious at all seasons, in the season of health is noble. It is a generous principle when it overtakes us surrounded with the prosperities of life, when it is not put off till distress drives us to it. Seriousness of spirit is most acceptable to God when danger is out of sight, preparations for death when death appears to be at a distance.

Virtue and piety are founded on the nature of things, on the laws of God, not on any vicissitudes in human circumstances. Irreligion, folly, and vice, are just as unreasonable in the meridian of life as at the approach of death. They strike us differently but they always retain their own character. Every argument against an irreligious death is equally cogent against an irreligious life. Piety and penitence may be quickened by the near view of death, but the reasons for practising them are not founded on its nearness. Death may stimulate our fears for the consequences of vice, but furnishes no motive for avoiding it, which Christianity had not taught before. The necessity of religion is as urgent now as it will be when we are dying. It may not appear so, but the reality of a thing does not depend on appearances. Besides, if the necessity of being religious depended on the approach of death, what moment of our lives is there, in which we have any security against it? In every point of view, therefore, the same necessity for being religious

subsists when we are in full health as when we are about to die.

We may then fairly arrive at this conclusion, that there is no *happy death* but that which conducts to a *happy immortality*:—No joy in putting off the body, if we have not put on the Lord Jesus Christ;—No consolation in escaping from the miseries of time, till we have obtained a well grounded hope of a blessed eternity.

CHAP. XX.

On the Sufferings of Good Men.

Affliction is the school in which great virtues are acquired, in which great characters are formed. It is a kind of moral Gymnasium, in which the disciples of Christ are trained to robust exercise, hardy exertion, and severe conflict.

We do not hear of martial heroes in 'the calm and piping time of peace,' nor of the most eminent saints in the quiet and unmolested periods of ecclesiastical history. We are far from denying that the principle of courage in the warrior, or of piety in the saint continues to subsist, ready to be brought into action when perils beset the country or trials assail the church; but it must be allowed that in long periods of inaction, both are liable to decay.

The Christian, in our comparatively tranquil day, is happily exempt from the trials and the terrors which the annals of persecution record. Thanks to the establishment of a pure Christianity in the church, thanks to the infusion of the same pure principle into our laws, and to the mild and tolerating spirit of both—a man is so far from being liable to pains and penalties for his attachment to his religion, that he is protected in its exercise; and were certain existing statutes enforced, he would even incur penalties for his violation of religious duties, rather than for his observance of them.*

Yet still the Christian is not exempt from his individual, his appropriate, his undefined trials. We refer not merely to those 'cruel mockings,' which the acute sensibility of the apostle led him to rank in the same catalogue with bonds, imprisonments, exile and martyrdom itself. We allude not altogether to those misrepresentations and calumnies to which the zealous Christian is peculiarly liable; nor exclusively to those difficulties to which his very adherence to the principles he professes, must necessarily subject him; nor entirely to those occasional sacrifices of credit, of advancement, of popular applause, to which his refusing to sail with the tide of popular opinion may compel him; nor solely to the disadvantages which under certain circumstances his not preferring expediency to principle may expose him. But the truly good man is not only often called to struggle with trials of large dimensions, with exigencies of obvious difficulty, but to encounter others which are better understood than defined.

* We allude to the laws against swearing, attending public worship, &c.

And duller would he be than the fat weed
That rots itself at ease on Lethe's wharf,

were he left to batten undisturbed, in peaceful security, on the unwholesome pastures of rank prosperity. The thick exhalations drawn up from this gross soil render the atmosphere so heavy as to obstruct the ascent of piety, her flagging pinions are kept down by the influence of this moist vapour; she is prevented from soaring,

——— —to live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
Which men call earth.

The pampered Christian thus continually gravitating to the earth, would have his heart solely bent to

Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown *religion* gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants.

It is an unspeakable blessing that no events are left to the choice of beings, who from their blindness would seldom fail to choose amiss. Were circumstances at our own disposal we should allot ourselves nothing but ease and success, but riches and fame, but protracted youth, perpetual health, unvaried happiness.

All this as it would not be very unnatural, so perhaps it would not be very wrong, for beings who were always to live on earth. But for beings who are placed here in a state of trial and not established in their final home, whose condition in eternity depends on the use they make of time, nothing would be more dangerous than such a power, nothing more fatal than the consequences to which such a power would lead.

If a surgeon were to put in the hand of a wounded patient the probe or the lancet, with how much false tenderness would he treat himself! How skin-deep would be the examination, how slight the incision! The patient would escape the pain, but the wound might prove mortal. The practitioner therefore wisely uses his instruments himself. He goes deep perhaps, but not deeper than the case demands. The pain may be acute but the life is preserved.

Thus He in whose hands we are, is too good, and loves us too well to trust us with ourselves. He knows that we will not contradict our own inclinations, that we will not impose on ourselves any thing unpleasant, that we will not inflict on ourselves any voluntary pain, however necessary the infliction, however salutary the effect. God graciously does this for us himself, or he knows it would never be done.

A Christian is liable to the same sorrows and sufferings with other men: he has no where any promise of immunity from the troubles of life, but he has a merciful promise of support under them. He considers them in another view, he bears them with another spirit, he improves them to other purposes than those whose views are bounded by this world. Whatever may be the instruments of his sufferings, whether sickness, losses, calumnies, persecutions, he knows that it proceeds from God; all means are his instruments. All inferior causes operate by his directing hand.

We said that a Christian is liable to the same sufferings with other men. Might we not repeat what we have before said, that his very Christian profession is often the cause of his sufferings? They are the badge of his discipleship, the evidences of his Father's love; they are at once the marks of God's favour, and the materials of his own future happiness.

What were the arguments of worldly advantage held out through the whole New Testament, to induce the world to embrace the religion it taught? What was the condition of St. Paul's introduction to Christianity? It was not—I will crown him with honour and prosperity, with dignity and pleasure, but—I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.'

What were the virtues which Christ chiefly taught in his discourses? What were the graces he most recommended by his example? Self-denial, mortification, patience, long-suffering, renouncing ease and pleasure. These are the marks which have ever since its first appearance, distinguished Christianity from all the religions in the world, and on that account evidently prove its divine original. Ease, splendour, external prosperity, conquest, made no part of its establishment. Other empires have been founded in the blood of the vanquished.—the dominion of Christ was founded in his own blood. Most of the beatitudes which infinite compassion pronounced, have the sorrows of earth for their subject, but the joys of heaven for their completion.

To establish this religion in the world, the Almighty, as his own word assures us, subverted kingdoms and altered the face of nations. 'For thus saith the Lord of Hosts,' (by his prophet Haggai) 'yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the dry land, and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.' Could a religion, the kingdom of which was to be founded by such awful means, be established, be perpetuated, without involving the sufferings of its subjects.

If the Christian course had been meant for a path of roses, would the life of the author of Christianity have been a path strewed with thorns? 'He made for us,' says bishop Jeremy Taylor, 'a covenant of sufferings, his very promises were sufferings; his rewards were sufferings, and his arguments to invite men to follow him were only taken from sufferings in this life, and the reward of sufferings hereafter.

But if no prince but the Prince of Peace ever set out with the proclamation of the reversionary nature of his empire—if no other king, to allay avarice and check ambition, ever invited subjects by the unalluring declaration that 'his kingdom was not of this world'—if none other ever declared that it was not dignity or honours, valour or talents that made them 'worthy of him,' but 'taking up the cross'—if no other ever made the sorrows which would attend his followers a motive for their attachment—yet no other ever had the goodness to promise, or the power to make his promise good, that he would give 'rest to the heavy laden.' Other sovereigns have 'overcome the world' for their own ambition, but none besides ever thought of making the 'tribulation' which should be the effect of that conquest, a ground for animating the fidelity of his followers—ever thought of bidding them 'be of good cheer,' because he had overcome the world in a sense which was to make his subjects lose all hope of rising in it.

The apostle to the Philippians enumerated it among the honours and distinctions prepared for his most favoured converts, not only that 'they should believe in Christ,' but that they should also 'suffer for him.' Any other religion would have made use of such a promise as an argument to deter, not to attract. That a religion should flourish the more under such discouraging invitations, with the threat of even degrading circumstances and absolute losses, is an unanswerable evidence that it was of no human origin.

It is among the mercies of God, that he strengthens the virtues of his servants by hardening them under the cold and bracing climate of adverse fortune, instead of leaving them to languish under the shining but withering sun of unclouded prosperity. When they cannot be attracted to him by gentler influences, he sends these salutary storms and tempests, which purify while they alarm. Our gracious Father knows that eternity is long enough for his children to be happy in.

The character of Christianity may be seen by the very images of military conflict, under which the Scriptures so frequently exhibit it. Suffering is the initiation into a Christian's calling. It is his education for heaven. Shall the scholar rebel at the discipline which is to fit him for his profession; or the soldier at the exercise which is to qualify him for victory?

But the Christian's trials do not all spring from without. He would think them comparatively easy, had he only the opposition of men to struggle against, or even the severer dispensations of God to sustain. If he has a conflict with the world, he has a harder conflict with sin. His bosom foe is his most unyielding enemy:

> His warfare is within, there unfatigued
> His fervent spirit labours.

This it is which makes his other trials heavy, which makes his power of sustaining them weak, which renders his conquest over them slow and inconclusive; which too often solicits him to oppose interest to duty, indolence to resistance, and self-indulgence to victory.

This world is the stage on which worldly men more exclusively act, and the things of the world, and the applause of the world, are the rewards which they propose to themselves. These they often attain—with these they are satisfied. They aim at no higher end, and of their aim they are not disappointed. But let not the Christian repine at the success of those whose motives he rejects, whose practices he dares not adopt, whose ends he deprecates. If he feel any disposition to murmur when he sees the irreligious in great prosperity, let him ask himself if he would tread their path to attain their end—if he would do their work to obtain their wages? He knows he would not. Let him then cheerfully leave them to scramble for the prizes, and jostle for the places, which the world temptingly holds

out, but which he will not purchase at the world's price.

Consult the page of history, and observe, not only if the best men have been the most successful, but even if they have not often eminently failed in great enterprizes, undertaken perhaps on the purest principles; while unworthy instruments have been often employed, not only to produce dangerous revolutions, but to bring about events ultimately tending to the public benefit; enterprizes in which good men feared to engage, which perhaps they were not competent to effect, or in effecting which they might have wounded their conscience and endangered their souls.

Good causes are not always conducted by good men. A good cause may be connnected with something that is not good, with party for instance. Party often does that for virtue, which virtue is not able to do for herself; and thus the right cause is promoted and effected by some subordinate, even by some wrong motive. A worldly man, connecting himself with a religious cause, gives it that importance in the eyes of the world, which neither its own rectitude, nor that of its religious supporters had been able to give it. Nay the very piety of its advocates—for worldly men always connect piety with imprudence—had brought the wisdom, or at least the *expediency* of the cause into suspicion, and it is at last carried by a means foreign to itself. The character of the cause must be lowered, we had almost said, it must in a certain degree be deteriorated, to suit the general taste, even to obtain the approbation of that multitude for whose benefit it is intended.

How long, as we have had occasion to observe in another connexion, had the world groaned under the most tremendous engine which superstition and despotism, in dreadful confederation, ever contrived to force the consciences, and torture the bodies of men; where racks were used for persuasion, and flames for arguments! The best of men for ages have been mourning under this dread tribunal, without being competent to effect its overthrow; the worst of men have been able to accomplish it with a word.—It is a humiliating lesson for good men, when they thus see how entirely instrumentality may be separated from personal virtue.

We still fall into the error of which the prophet so long ago complained, 'we call the proud happy,' and the wicked fortunate, and our hearts are too apt to rise at their successes. We pretend indeed that they rise with indignation; but is it not to be feared that with this indignation is mixed a little envy, a little rebellion against God? We murmur, though we know that when the instrument has finished his work, the divine employer throws him by, cuts him off, lets him perish.

But you envy him in the midst of that work, to accomplish which he has sacrificed every principle of justice, truth, and mercy. Is this a man to be envied? Is this a prosperity to be grudged? Would you incur the penalties of that happiness at which you are not ashamed to murmur?

But is it happiness to commit sin, to be abhorred by good men, to offend God, to ruin his own soul? Do you really consider a temporary success a recompence for deeds which will ensure eternal woe to the perpetrator? Is the successful bad man happy? Of what materials then is happiness made up? Is it composed of a disturbed mind and an unquiet conscience? Are doubt and difficulty, are terror and apprehension, are distrust and suspicion, felicities for which a Christian would renounce his peace, would displease his Maker, would risk his soul? —Think of the hidden vulture that feeds on the vitals of successful wickedness, and your repinings, your envy, if you are so unhappy as to feel envy, will cease. Your indignation will be converted into compassion, your execrations into prayer.

But if he feel neither the scourge of conscience nor the sting of remorse, pity him the more. Pity him for the very want of that addition to his unhappiness: for if he added to his miseries that of anticipating his punishment, he might be led by repentance to avoid it. Can you reckon the blinding the eyes and the hardening his heart, any part of his happiness? This opinion, however, you practically adopt, whenever you grudge the propensity of the wicked. God, by delaying the punishment of bad men, for which we are so impatient, may have designs of mercy of which we know nothing;—mercy perhaps to them, or if not to them, yet mercy to those who are suffering by them, and whom he intends by these bad instruments to punish, and by punishing, eventually to save.

There is another sentiment which prosperous wickedness excites in certain minds; that is almost more preposterous than envy itself,—and that is respect; but this feeling is never raised unless both the wickedness and the prosperity be on a grand scale.

This sentiment also is founded in secret impiety, in the belief either that God does not govern human affairs, or that the motives of action are not regarded by him, or that prosperity is a certain proof of his favour, or that where there is success there must be worth. These flatterers however forsake the prosperous with their good fortune; their applause is withheld with the success which attracted it. As they were governed by events in their admiration, so events lead them to withdraw it.

But in this admiration there is a bad taste as well as a bad principle. If ever wickedness pretends to excite any idea of sublimity, it must be, not in its elevation but its fall. If ever Caius Marius raises any such sentiment, it is not when he carried the world before him, it is not in his seditious and bloody triumphs at Rome, but it is when in poverty and exile his intrepid look caused the dagger to drop from the hand of the executioner;—it is when sitting among the venerable ruins of Carthage he enjoined a desolation so congenial to his own—Dionysius, in the plenitude of arbitrary power, raises our unmixed abhorrence. We detest the oppressor of the people while he continued to trample on them, we execrate the monster who was not ashamed to sell Plato as a slave. If ever we feel any thing like interest on this subject, it is not with the tyrant of Syracuse but with the school-master of Corinth.

But though God may be patient with triumphant wickedness, he does not wink or connive at it. Between being permitted and supported, between being employed and approved, the distance is wider than we are ready to acknowledge. Perhaps 'the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.' God has always the means of punishment as well as of pardon in his own hands. But to punish just at the moment when *we* would hurl the bolt, might break in on a scheme of Providence of wide extent and indefinite consequences. 'They have drunk their hemlock,' says a fine writer, 'but the poison does not yet work.' Perhaps the convulsion may be the more terrible for the delay. Let us not be impatient to accomplish a sentence which infinite justice sees right to defer; it is always time enough to enter into hell. Let us think more of restraining our own vindictive tempers, than of precipitating their destruction. They may yet repent of their crimes they are perpetrating. God may still by some scheme, intricate, and unintelligible to us, pardon the sin which we think exceeds the limits even of his mercy.

But we contrive to make revenge itself look like religion. We call down thunder on many a head under pretence, that those on whom we invoke it are God's enemies, when perhaps we invoke it because they are ours.

But though they should go on with a full tide of prosperity to the end, will it not cure our impatience that that end must come?—Will it not satisfy us that they must die, that they must come to judgment? Which is to be envied, the Christian who dies and his brief sorrows have a period, or he who closes a prosperous life and enters on a miserable eternity? The one has nothing to fear if the promises of the Gospel be true, the other nothing to hope if they be not false. The work of God must be a lie, heaven a fable, hell an invention, before the impenitent sinner can be safe. Is that man to be envied whose security depends on their falsehood? Is the other to be pitied whose hope is founded on their reality? Can that state be happiness, which results from believing that there is no God, no future reckoning? Can that state be misery which consists in knowing that there is both?

In estimating the comparative happiness of good and bad men, we should ever bear in mind that of all the calamities which can be inflicted or suffered, sin is the greatest, and of all punishments insensibility to sin is the heaviest which the wrath of God inflicts in this world for the commission of it. God so far then from approving a wicked man, because he suffers him to go on triumphantly, seems rather by allowing him to continue his smooth and prosperous course, to have some awful destiny in store for him, which will not perhaps be revealed till his repentance is too late; then his knowledge of God's displeasure, and the dreadful consequences of that displeasure, may be revealed together, may be revealed when there is no room for mercy.

But without looking to futurity—consulting only the present condition of suffering virtue,—if we put the inward consolation derived from communion with God, the humble confidence of prayer, the devout trust in the divine protection, supports commonly reserved for the afflicted Christian, and eminently bestowed in his greatest exigence; if we place these feelings in the opposite scale with all that unjust power ever bestowed or guilty wealth possessed; we shall have no hesitation in deciding on which side even present happiness lies.

With a mind thus fixed, with a faith thus firm, one great object so absorbs the Christian, that his peace is not tossed about with the things which discompose ordinary men. 'My fortune,' may he say, 'it is true, is shattered; but as I made not 'fine gold my confidence' while I possessed it, in losing it I have not lost myself. I leaned not on power, for I knew its instability. Had prosperity been my dependence, my support being removed, I must fall.'

In the case of the afflicted Christian you lament perhaps with the wife of the persecuted hero, that he suffers being innocent. But would it extract the sting from suffering, were guilt added to it! Out of two worlds to have all sorrow in this and no hope in the next would be indeed intolerable. Would you have him purchase a reprieve from suffering by sinful compliances? Think how ease would be destroyed by the price paid for it! For how short a time he would enjoy it, even if it were not bought at the expence of his soul!

It would be preposterous to say that suffering is the recompence of virtue, and yet it may with truth be asserted that the capacity for enjoying the reward of virtue is enlarged by suffering, and thus it becomes not only the instrument of promoting virtue, but the instrument of rewarding it. Besides, God chooses for the confirmation of our faith, as well as for the consummation of his gracious plans, to reserve in his own hand this most striking proof of a future retribution. To suppose that he *cannot* ultimately recompense his virtuous afflicted children, is to believe him less powerful than an earthly father; to suppose that he *will* not is to believe him less merciful.

Great trials are oftener proofs of favour than of displeasure. An inferior officer will suffice for inferior expeditions, but the sovereign selects the ablest general for the most difficult service. And not only does the king evidence his opinion by the selection, but the soldier proves his attachment by rejoicing in the preference. His having gained one victory is no reason for his being set aside. Conquest, which qualifies him for new attacks, suggests a reason for his being again employed.

The sufferings of good men by no means contradict the promises that 'Godliness has the promise of the life that now is,' nor that promise 'that the meek shall inherit the earth.' They possess it by the spirit in which they enjoy its blessings, by the spirit with which they resign them.

The belief too that trials will facilitate salvation is another source of consolation. Sufferings also abate the dread of death by cheapening the price of life. The affections even of the real Christian are too much drawn downwards. His heart too fondly cleaves to the dust, though he knows that trouble springs out of it. How would it be, if he invariably possessed present

enjoyments, and if a long vista of delights lay always open before him? He has a farther comfort in his own honest consciousness; a bright conviction that his Christian feeling under trials, is a cheering evidence that his piety is sincere. The gold has been melted down, and its purity is ascertained.

Among his other advantages, the afflicted Christian has that of being able to apply to the mercy of God: not as a new and untried, and therefore an uncertain resource. He does not come as an alien before a strange master, but as a child into the well known presence of a tender father. He did not put off prayer till this pressing exigence. He did not make his God a sort of *dernier resort*, to be had recourse to only in the great water-floods. He had long and diligently sought him in the calm; he had adhered to him, if the phrase may be allowed, before he was driven to it. He had sought God's favour while he enjoyed the favour of the world. He did not wait for the day of evil to seek the supreme Good. He did not defer his meditations on heavenly things to the disconsolate hour when earth has nothing for him. He can cheerfully associate religion with those former days of felicity, when with every thing before him out of which to choose, he chose God. He not only feels the support derived from his present prayers, but the benefit of all those which he offered up in the day of joy and gladness. He will especially derive comfort from the supplications he had made for the anticipated though unknown trial of the present hour, and which in such a world of vicissitudes, it was reasonable to expect.

Let us confess, then, that in all the trying circumstances of this changeful scene, there is something infinitely soothing to the feelings of a Christian, something inexpressibly tranquilizing to his mind, to know that he has nothing to do with events, but to submit to them; that he has nothing to do with the revolutions of life but to acquiesce in them, as the dispensations of eternal wisdom; that he has not to take the management out of the hands of Providence, but submissively to follow the divine leading; that he has not to contrive for to-morrow, but to acquiesce to-day; not to condition about events yet to come, but to meet those which are present with cheerful resignation. Let him be thankful that as he could not by foreseeing, prevent them, so he was not permitted to foresee them, thankful for ignorance where knowledge would only prolong without preventing suffering; thankful for that grace which has promised that our strength shall be proportioned to our day, thankful that as he is not responsible for trials which he has not brought on himself, so by the goodness of God these trials may be improved to the noblest purposes. The quiet acquiescence of the heart, the annihilation of the will under actual circumstances, be the trial great or small, is more acceptable to God, more indicative of true piety, than the strongest general resolutions of firm acting and deep submission under the most trying unborn events. In the remote case it is the imagination which submits: in the actual case it is the will.

We are too ready to imagine that there is no other way of serving God but by active exertions; exertions which are often made because they indulge our natural taste, and gratify our own inclinations.—But it is an error to imagine that God, by putting us in any supposable situation, puts it out of our power to glorify him; that he can place us under any circumstances which may not be turned to some account, either for ourselves or others. Joseph in his prison, under the strongest disqualifications, loss of liberty, and a blasted reputation, made way for both his own high advancement and for the deliverance of Israel. Daniel in his dungeon, not only the destined prey, but in the very jaws of furious beasts, converted the king of Babylon, and brought him to the knowledge of the true God. Could prosperity have effected the former? Would not prosperity have prevented the latter?

But to descend to more familiar instances;—It is among the ordinary, though most mysterious dispensations of Providence, that many of his appointed servants who are not only eminently fitted, but also most zealously disposed, to glorify their Redeemer, by instructing and reforming their fellow creatures, are yet disqualified by disease, and set aside from that public duty of which the necessity is so obvious, and of which the fruits were so remarkable; whilst many others possess uninterrupted health and strength, for the exercise of those functions for which they are little gifted and less disposed.

But God's ways are not as our ways. He is not accountable to his creatures. The caviller would know why it is right. The suffering Christian believes and feels it to be right. He humbly acknowledges the necessity of the affliction which his friends are lamenting; he feels the mercy of the measure which others are suspecting of injustice. With deep humility he is persuaded that if the affliction is not yet withdrawn, it is because it has not yet accomplished the purpose for which it was sent. The privation is probably intended both for the individual interest of the sufferer, and for the reproof of those who have neglected to profit by his labours. Perhaps God more especially thus draws still nearer to himself, him who had drawn so many others.

But to take a more particular view of the case, we are too ready to consider suffering as an indication of God's displeasure, not so much against sin in general, as against the individual sufferer. Were this the case, then would those saints and martyrs who have pined in exile, and groaned in dungeons, and expired on scaffolds, have been the objects of God's peculiar wrath instead of his special favour. But the truth is, some little tincture of latent infidelity mixes itself in almost all our reasonings on these topics. We do not constantly take into the account a future state. We want God, if I may hazard the expression, to clear himself as he goes. We cannot give him such long credit as the period of human life. He must every moment be vindicating his character against every sceptical cavil; he must unravel his plans to every shallow critic, he must anticipate the knowledge of his design before its operations are completed.

If we may adopt a phrase in use among the vulgar, we will trust him no farther than we can see him. Though he has said, 'judge nothing before the time, we judge instantly, of course rashly, and in general falsely. Were the brevity of earthly prosperity and suffering, the certainty of retributive justice, and the eternity of future blessedness perpetually kept in view, we should have more patience with God.

Even in judging fictitious compositions, we are more just. During the perusal of a tragedy, or any work of invention, though we feel for the distresses of the personages, yet we do not form an ultimate judgment of the propriety or injustice of their sufferings. We wait for the catastrophe. We give the poet credit either that he will extricate them from their distresses, or eventually explain the justice of them. We do not condemn him at the end of every scene for the trials of that scene, which the sufferers do not appear to have deserved; for the sufferings which do not always seem to have arisen from their own misconduct. We behold the trials of the virtuous with sympathy, and the successes of the wicked with indignation; but we do not pass our final sentence till the poet has passed his. We reserve our decisive judgment till the last scene closes, till the curtain drops. Shall we not treat the schemes of Infinite Wisdom with as much respect as the plot of a drama?

But to borrow our illustrations from realities. —In a court of justice the by-standers do not give their sentence in the midst of a trial. We wait patiently till all the evidence is collected, and circumstantially detailed, and finally summed up. And—to pursue the illusion—imperfect as human decisions may possibly be, fallible as we must allow the most deliberate and honest verdict must prove, we commonly applaud the justice of the jury, and the equity of the judge. The felon they condemn, we rarely acquit; where they remit judgment, we rarely denounce it.—It is only INFINITE WISDOM on whose purposes we cannot rely; it is only INFINITE MERCY whose operations we cannot trust. It is only 'the Judge of all the earth' who cannot do right. We reverse the order of God by summoning HIM at our bar, at whose awful bar we shall soon be judged.

But to return to our more immediate point—the apparently unfair distribution of prosperity between good and bad men. As their case is opposite in every thing—the one is constantly deriving his happiness from that which is the source of the other's misery, a sense of the divine omniscience. The eye of God if a 'pillar of light' to the one, 'and a cloud and darkness' to the other. It is no less a terror to him who dreads His justice, than a joy to him who derives all his support from the awful thought, THOU GOD SEEST!

But as we have already observed, can we want a broader line of discrimination between them than their actual condition here, independently of the different portions reserved for them hereafter? Is it not distinction enough, that the one, though sad, is safe; that the other, though confident, is insecure? Is not the one as far from rest as he is from virtue, as far from the enjoyment of quiet as from the hope of heaven, as far from peace as he is from God? Is it nothing that every day brings the Christian nearer to his crown, and that the sinner is every day working his way nearer to his ruin? The hour of death which the one dreads as something worse than extinction, is to the other the hour of his nativity, the birth-day of immortality. At the height of his sufferings, the good man knows that they will soon terminate. In the zenith of his success the sinner has a similar assurance. But how different is the result of the same conviction! An invincible faith sustains the one, in the severest calamities, while an inextinguishable dread gives the lie to the proudest triumphs of the other.

He then, after all, is the only happy man,—not whom worldly prosperity renders apparently happy, but whom no change of worldly circumstances can make essentially miserable; whose peace depends not on external events, but on an internal support; not on that success which is common to all, but on that hope which is the peculiar privilege, on that promise which is the sole prerogative of a Christian.

CHAP. XXI.

The temper and conduct of the Christian in Sickness and in Death.

THE pagan philosophers have given many admirable precepts both for resigning blessings and for sustaining misfortunes; but wanting the motives and sanctions of Christianity, though they excite much intellectual admiration, they produce little practical effect. The stars which glittered in their moral night, though bright, imparted no warmth. Their most beautiful dissertations on death had no charm to extract its sting. We receive no support from their most elaborate treatises on immortality, for want of Him who 'brought life and immortality to light.' Their consolatory discussion could not strip the grave of its terrors, for to them it was not 'swallowed up in victory.' To conceive of the soul as an immortal principle, without proposing a scheme for the pardon of its sins, was but cold consolation. Their future state was but a happy guess: their heaven but a fortunate conjecture.

When we peruse their finest compositions, we admire the manner in which the medicine is administered, but we do not find it effectual for the cure, nor even for the mitigation of our disease. The beauty of the sentiment we applaud, but our heart continues to ache. There is no healing balm in their elegant prescription. These four little words, 'THY WILL BE DONE,' contain a charm of more powerful efficacy than all the discipline of the stoic school! They cut up a long train of clear but cold reasoning, and supercede whole volumes of argument on fate and necessity.

What sufferer ever derived any ease from the subtle distinction of the hair-splitting casuist, who allowed 'that pain was very troublesome, but resolved never to acknowledge it to be an evil?' There is an equivocation in his manner of stating the proposition. He does not directly

say that pain is not an evil, but by a sophistical turn professes that philosophy will never *confess* it to be an evil. But what consolation does the sufferer draw from the quibbling nicety? 'What difference is there,' as archbishop Tillotson well inquires, 'between things being troublesome and being evils, when all the evil of an affliction lies in the trouble it creates to us?'

Christianity knows none of these fanciful distinctions. She never pretends to insist that pain is not an evil, but she does more; she converts it into a good. Christianity therefore teaches fortitude as much more noble than philosophy, as meeting pain with resignation to the hand that inflicts it, is more heroic than denying it to be an evil.

To submit on the mere human ground that there is no alternative, is not resignation, but hopelessness. To bear affliction solely because impatience will not remove it is but an inferior, though a just reason for bearing it. It savours rather of despair than submission, when not sanctioned by a higher principle.—'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good,' is at once a motive of more powerful obligation, than all the documents which philosophy ever suggested; a firmer ground of support than all the energies that natural fortitude ever supplied.

Under any visitation, sickness for instance, God permits us to think the affliction 'not joyous but grievous.' But though he allows us to feel, we must not allow ourselves to repine. There is again a sort of heroism in bearing up against affliction, which some adopt on the ground that it raises their character, and confers dignity on their suffering. This philosophic firmness is far from being the temper which Christianity inculcates.

When we are compelled by the hand of God to endure sufferings, or driven by a conviction of the vanity of the world to renounce its enjoyments, we must not endure the one on the low principle of its being inevitable, nor, in flying from the other must we retire to the contemplation of our own virtues. We must not, with a sullen intrepidity, collect ourselves into a centre of our own; into a cold apathy to all without, and a proud approbation of all within. We must not contract our scattered faults into a sort of dignified selfishness; nor concentrate our feelings into a proud magnanimity, we must not adopt an independent rectitude. A gloomy stoicism is not Christian heroism. A melancholy non-resistance is not Christian resignation.

Nor must we indemnify ourselves for our outward self-control by secret murmurings. We may be admired for our resolution in this instance, as for our generosity and disinterestedness in other instances; but we deserve little commendation for whatever we give up, if we do not give up our own inclination. It is inward repining that we must endeavour to repress; it is the discontent of the heart, the unexpressed but not unfelt murmur, against which we must pray for grace and struggle for resistance. We must not smother our discontents before others, and feed on them in private. It is the hidden rebellion of the will we must subdue, if we would submit as Christians. Nor must we justify our impatience by saying that if our affliction did not disqualify us from being useful to our families, and active in the service of God, we could more cheerfully bear it. Let us rather be assured that it does not disqualify us for that duty which we most need, and to which God calls us by the very disqualification.

A constant posture of defence against the attacks of our great spiritual enemy, is a better security than an incidental blow, or even an occasional victory. It is also a better preparation for all the occurrences of life. It is not some signal act of mortification, but an habitual state of discipline which will prepare us for great trials. A soul ever on the watch, fervent in prayer, diligent in self-inspection, frequent in meditation, fortified against the vanities of time by repeated views of eternity, all the avenues to such a heart will be in a good measure shut against temptation, barred in a great degree against the the tempter. 'Strong in the Lord and in the power of his might,' it will be ennabled to resist the one, to expel the other. To a mind so prepared, the thoughts of sickness will not be new, for he knows it is the 'condition of the battle; the prospect of death will not be surprising, for he knows it is its termination.

The period is now come when we must summon all the fortitude of the rational being, all the resignation of the Christian. The principles we have been learning must now be made practical. The speculations we have admired we must now realize. All that we have been studying was in order to furnish materials for this grand exigence.—All the strength we have been collecting must now be brought into action. We must now draw to a point all the scattered arguments, all the several motives, all the individual supports, all the cheering promises of religion. We must exemplify all the rules we have given to others; we must embody all the resolutions we have formed for ourselves; we must reduce our precepts to experience; we must pass from discourses on submission to its exercise; from dissertations on suffering to sustaining it. We must heroically call up the determinations of our better days. We must recollect what we have said of the supports of faith and hope when our strength was in full vigour, when our heart was at ease, and our mind undisturbed. Let us collect all that remains to us of mental strength. Let us implore the aid of holy hope and fervent faith, to show that religion is not a beautiful theory, but a soul-sustaining truth.

Endeavour without harrassing scrutiny or distressing doubt, to act on the principles which your sounder judgment formerly admitted. The strongest faith is wanted in the hardest trials. Under those trials, to the confirmed Christian the highest degree of grace is commonly imparted. Impair not that faith on which you rested when your mind was strong, by suspecting its validity now it is weak. That which had your full assent in perfect health, which was then firmly rooted in your spirit, and grounded in your understanding, must not be unfixed by the doubts of an enfeebled reason and the scruples of an impaired judgment. You may not now be able to determine on the reasonableness of propositions, but you may derive

strong consolation from conclusions which were once fully established in your mind.

The reflecting Christian will consider the natural evil of sickness as the consequence and punishment of moral evil. He will mourn, not only that he suffers pain, but because that pain is the effect of sin. If man had not sinned, he would not have suffered. The heaviest aggravation of his pain is to know that he has deserved it. But it is a counterbalance to this trial to know that our merciful Father has no pleasure in the sufferings of his children; that he chastens them in love; that he never inflicts a stroke which he could safely spare; that he inflicts it to purify as well as to punish, to caution as well as to cure, to improve as well as to chastise.

What a support in the dreary season of sickness is it to reflect, that the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings; that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, which implies also the reverse, that if we do not suffer with him, we shall not reign with him; that is, if we suffer merely because we cannot help it, without reference to him, without suffering for his sake and in his spirit. If it be not sanctified suffering it will avail but little. We shall not be paid for having suffered, as is the creed of too many, but our meetness for the kingdom of glory will be increased if we suffer according to his will and after his example.

He who is brought to serious reflection by the salutary affliction of a sick bed, will look back with astonishment on his former false estimate of worldly things. Riches! Beauty! Pleasure! Genius! Fame!—What are they in the eyes of the sick and the dying?

Riches! These are so far from affording him a moment's ease, that it will be well if no former misapplication of them aggravate his present pains. He feels as if he only wished to live that he might henceforth dedicate them to the purposes for which they were given.

Beauty! What is beauty, he cries, as he considers his own sunken eyes, hollow cheeks, and pallid countenance. He acknowledges with the Psalmist, that the consuming of beauty is 'the rebuke with which the Almighty corrects man for sin.'

Genius! What is it? Without religion, genius is only a lamp on the gate of a palace. It may serve to cast a gleam of light on those without, while the inhabitant sits in darkness.

Pleasure! That has not left a trace behind it. 'It died in the birth, and is not therefore worthy to come into the bill of Mortality.'*

Fame! Of this his very soul acknowledges the emptiness. He is astonished how he could ever be so infatuated as to run after a sound, to court a breath, to pursue a shadow, to embrace a cloud. Augustus, asking his friends as they surrounded his dying bed, if he had acted his part well, on their answering in the affirmative, cried *plaudite*. But the acclamations of the whole universe would rather mock than sooth the dying Christian if unsanctioned by the hope of the divine approbation. He now rates at its just value that fame which was so often eclipsed by envy, and which will be so soon forgotten in death. He has no ambition left but for heaven, where there will be neither envy, death, nor forgetfulness.

When capable of reflection, the sick Christian will revolve all the sins and errors of his past life; he will humble himself for them as sincerely as if he had never repented of them before; and implore the divine forgiveness as fervently as if he did not believe they were long since forgiven. The remembrance of his former offences will grieve him, but the humble hope that they are pardoned will fill him 'with joy unspeakable and full of glory.'

Even in this state of helplessness he may improve his self-acquaintance. He may detect new deficiencies in his character, fresh imperfections in his virtues. Omissions will now strike him with the force of actual sins. Resignation, which he fancied was so easy when only the sufferings of others required it, he now finds to be difficult when called on to practise it himself. He has sometimes wondered at their impatience, he is now humbled at his own. He will not only try to bear patiently the pains he actually suffers, but will recollect gratefully those from which he has been delivered, and which he may have formerly found less supportable than his present sufferings.

In the extremity of pain he feels there is no consolation but in humble acquiescence in the divine will. It may be that he can pray but little, but that little will be fervent. He can articulate perhaps not at all, but his prayer is addressed to one who sees the heart, who can interpret its language, who requires not words, but affections. A pang endured without a murmur, or only such an involuntary groan as nature extorts, and faith regrets, is itself a prayer.

If surrounded with all the accommodations of affluence, let him compare his own situation with that of thousands, who probably with greater merit, and under severer trials, have not one of his alleviations. When invited to the distasteful remedy, let him reflect how many perishing fellow creatures may be pining for that remedy, to whom it might be restorative, or who, fancying that it might be so, suffer additional distress from their inability to procure it.

In the intervals of severer pain he will turn his few advantages to the best account. He will make the most of every short respite. He will patiently bear with little disappointments, little delays, with the awkwardness of accidental neglect of his attendants, and, thankful for general kindness, he will accept good will instead of perfection. The suffering Christian will be grateful for small reliefs, little alleviations, short snatches of rest. To him, abated pain will be positive pleasure. The freer use of limbs which had nearly lost their activity, will be enjoyments. Let not the reader who is rioting

In all the madness of superfluous health,

think lightly of these trivial comforts. Let him not despise them as not worthy of gratitude, or as not capable of exciting it. He may one day, and that no distant day, be brought to the same

*Bishop Hall.

state of debility and pain. May he experience the mercies he now derides, and may he feel higher comforts of safe grounds!

The sufferer has perhaps often regretted that one of the worst effects of sickness is the selfishness it too naturally induces. The temptation to this he will resist, by not being exacting and unreasonable in his requisitions. Through his tenderness to the feelings of others, he will be careful not to add to their distress by any appearance of discontent.

What a lesson against selfishness have we in the conduct of our dying Redeemer!—It was while bearing his cross to the place of execution, that he said to the sorrowing multitude, 'Weep not for me, but for yourselves and for your children.' It was while enduring the agonies of crucifixion that he endeavoured to mitigate the sorrows of his mother and of his friend, by tenderly committing them to each other's care.—It was while sustaining the pangs of dissolution, that he gave the immediate promise of heaven to the expiring criminal.

The Christian will review, if able, not only the sins, but the mercies of his past life. If previously accustomed to unbroken health, he will bless God for the long period in which he has enjoyed it. If continued infirmity has been his portion, he will feel grateful that he has had such a long and gradual weaning from the world. From either state he will extract consolation. If pain be new, what a mercy to have hitherto escaped it! If habitual, we bear more easily what we have borne long.

He will review his temporal blessings and deliverances; his domestic comforts, his Christian friendships. Among his mercies, his now 'purged eyes' will reckon his difficulties, his sorrows and trials. A new and heavenly light will be thrown on that passage, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.' It seems to him as if hitherto he had only heard it with the hearing of his ear, but now his 'eye seeth it.' If he be a real Christian, and has had enemies, he will always have prayed for them, but now he will be thankful for them. He will the more earnestly implore mercy for them as instruments which have helped to fit him for his present state. He will look up with holy gratitude to the great Physician, who by a divine chemistry in making up events, has made that one unpalatably ingredient, at the bitterness of which he once revolted, the very means by which all other things have worked together for good; had they worked separately they would not have worked efficaciously.

Under the most severe visitations, let us compare, if the capacity of comparing be allowed us, our own sufferings with the cup which our Redeemer drank for our sakes—drank to avert the divine displeasure from us. Let us pursue the comparative view of our condition with that of the Son of God. He was deserted in his most trying hour; deserted probably by those whose limbs, sight, life, he had restored, whose souls he had come to save. We are surrounded by unwearied friends; every pain is mitigated by sympathy, every want not only relieved but prevented; the 'asking eye' explored; the inarticulate sound understood; the ill-expressed wish anticipated; the but suspected want supplied. When *our* souls are 'exceeding sorrowful,' *our* friends participate our sorrow; when desired 'to watch' with us, they watch not 'one hour,' but many, not falling asleep, but both flesh and spirit ready and willing; not forsaking us in our 'agony,' but sympathizing where they cannot relieve!

Besides this, we must acknowledge with the penitent malefactor, 'we indeed suffer justly, but this man hath done nothing amiss.' We suffer for our offences the inevitable penalty of our fallen nature. He bore *our* sins and those of the whole human race. Hence the heart-rending interrogation, 'Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.'

How cheering in this forlorn state to reflect that he not only suffered for us then, but is sympathizing with us now; that 'in all our afflictions he is afflicted.' The tenderness of the sympathy seems to add a value to the sacrifice, while the vastness of the sacrifice, endears the sympathy by ennobling it.

If the intellectual powers be mercifully preserved, how many virtues may now be brought into exercise which had either lain dormant, or been considered as of inferior worth in the prosperous day of activity. The Christian temper indeed seems to be that part of religion which is more peculiarly to be exercised on a sick bed. The passive virtues, the least brilliant, but the most difficult, are then particularly called into action. To *suffer* the whole will of God on the tedious bed of languishing, is more trying than to perform the most shining exploit on the theatre of the world. The hero in the field of battle has the love of fame as well as patriotism to support him. He knows that the witnesses of his valour will be the heralds of his renown. The martyr at the stake is divinely strengthened. Extraordinary grace is imparted for extraordinary trials. His pangs are exquisite, but they are short.'—The crown is in sight, it is almost in possession. By faith 'he sees the heavens opened. He sees the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.' But to be strong in faith, and patient in hope, in a long and lingering sickness, is an example of more general use and ordinary application, than even the sublime heroism of the martyr. The sickness is brought home to our feelings, we see it with our eyes, we apply it to our hearts. Of the martyr we read, indeed, with astonishment. Our faith is strengthened, and our admiration kindled; but we read it without that special approbation, without that peculiar reference to our own circumstances, which we feel in cases that are likely to apply to ourselves. With the dying friend we have not only a feeling of pious tenderness, but there is also a community of interests. The certain conviction that his case must soon be our own, makes it our own now. Self mixes with the social feeling, and the Christian death we are contemplating we do not so much admire as a prodigy, as propose for a model. To the martyr's stake we feel that we

are not likely to be brought. To the dying bed we must inevitably come.

Accommodating his state of mind to the nature of his disease, the dying Christian will derive consolation in any case, either from thinking how forcibly a sudden sickness breaks the chain which binds him to the world, or how gently a gradual decay unties it. He will feel and acknowledge the necessity of all he suffers to wean him from life. He will admire the divine goodness which commissions the infirmities of sickness to divest the world of its enchantments, and to strip death of some of its most formidable terrors. He feels with how much less reluctance we quit a body exhausted by suffering than one in the vigour of health

Sickness, instead of narrowing the heart—its worst effect on an unrenewed mind, enlarges his. He earnestly exhorts those around him to defer no act of repentance, no labour of love, no deed of justice, no work of mercy, to that state of incapacity in which he now lies.

How many motives has the Christian to restrain his murmurs! Murmuring offends God both as it is injurious to his goodness, and as it perverts the occasion which God has now offered for giving an example of patience. Let us not complain that we have nothing to do in sickness, when we are furnished with the opportunity as well as called to the duty of resignation; the duty indeed is always ours, but the occasion is now more eminently given. Let us not say even in this depressed state that we have nothing to be thankful for. If sleep be afforded, let us acknowledge the blessing: if wearisome nights be our portion, let us remember they are 'appointed to us.' Let us mitigate the grievance of watchfulness, by considering it as a sort of prolongation of life; as the gift of more minutes granted for meditation and prayer. If we are not able to employ it to either of these purposes, there is a fresh occasion for exercising that resignation which will be accepted for both.

If reason be continued, yet with sufferings too intense for any religious duty, the sick Christian may take comfort that the business of life was accomplished, before the sickness began. He will not be terrified if duties are superseded, if means are at an end, for he has nothing to do but to die.—This is the act for which all acts, all other duties, all other means, will have been preparing him. He who has long been habituated to look death in the face, who has often anticipated the agonies of dissolving nature; who has accustomed himself to pray for support under them, will now feel the blessed effect of those petitions which have long been treasured in heaven. To those anticipatory prayers he may perhaps now owe the humble confidence of hope in this inevitable hour. Habituated to the contemplation, he will not, at least, have the dreadful additions of surprise and novelty to aggravate the trying scene. It has long been familiar to his mind, though hitherto it could only operate with the inferior force of a picture to a reality. He will not however have so much scared his imagination by the terrors of death, as invigorated his spirit by looking beyond them to the blessedness which follows. Faith will not so much dwell on the opening grave as shoot forward to the glories to which it leads. The hope of heaven will soften the pangs which lie in the way to it. On heaven then he will fix his eyes rather than on the awful intervening circumstances. He will not dwell on the struggle which is for a moment, but on the crown which is forever. He will endeavour to think less of death than of its conqueror; less of the grave than of its spoiler; less of the body in ruins than of the spirit in glory; less of the darkness of his closing day than of the opening dawn of immortality. In some brighter moments, when viewing his eternal redemption drawing nigh, as if the freed spirit had already burst its prison walls, as if the manumission had actually taken place, he is ready exultingly to exclaim, 'My soul is escaped, the snare is broken, and I am delivered.'

If he ever inclines to wish for recovery, it is only that he may glorify God by his future life, more than he has done by the past; but as he knows the deceitfulness of his heart, he is not certain that this would be the case, and he therefore does not wish to live. Yet should he be restored he humbly resolves, in a better strength than his own, to dedicate his life to the restorer.

But he suffers not his thoughts to dwell on life. Retrospections are at an end. His prospects as to this world are at an end also. He commits himself unreservedly to his heavenly Father. But though secure of the port, he may still dread the passage. The Christian will rejoice that his rest is at hand, the man may shudder at the unknown transit. If faith is strong, nature is weak. Nay, in this awful exigence, strong faith is sometimes rendered faint through the weakness of nature.

At the moment when his faith is looking round for every additional confirmation, he may rejoice in those blessed certainties, those glorious realizations which scripture affords. He may take comfort that the strongest attestations given by the apostles to the reality of the heavenly state, were not conjectural. They, to use the words of our Saviour, spake what they knew, and testified what they had seen. 'I reckon,' says St. Paul, 'that the afflictions of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed.' He said this *after* he had been caught up in the third heaven; *after* he had beheld the glories to which he alludes. The author of the Apocalyptic vision, having described the ineffable glories of the new Jerusalem, thus puts new life and power into his description.—'I John *saw* these things, and *heard* them.'

The power of distinguishing objects increases with our approach to them. The Christian feels that he is entering on a state where every care will cease, every fear vanish, every desire be fulfilled, every sin be done away, every grace perfected: where there will be no more temptations to resist, no more passions to subdue, no more insensibility to mercies, no more deadness in service, no more wandering in prayer, no more sorrows to be felt for himself, no tears to be shed for others. He is going where his devotion will be without languor, his love without alloy, his doubts certainty, his expectation enjoyment, his hope fruition. All will be perfect, for God will be all in all.

From God he knows that he shall derive immediately all his happiness. It will no longer pass through any of those channels which now sully its purity. It will be offered him through no second cause which may fail, no intermediate agent which may deceive, no uncertain medium which may disappoint. The felicity is not only certain, but perfect,—not only perfect, but eternal.

As he approaches the land of realities, the shadows of this earth cease to interest or mislead him. The films are removed from his eyes. Objects are stripped of their false lustre. Nothing that is really little any longer looks great. The mists of vanity are dispersed. Every thing which is to have an end appears small, appears nothing. Eternal things assume their proper magnitude, for he beholds them in the true point of vision. He has ceased to lean on the world, for he has found it both a reed and a spear; it has failed and it has pierced him. He leans not on himself, for he has long known his weakness. He leans not on his virtues, for they can do nothing for him. Had he no better refuge he feels that his sun would set in darkness; his life close in despair.

But he knows in whom he has trusted, and therefore knows not what he should fear.—He looks upward with holy but humble confidence to that great Shepherd, who having long since conducted him into green pastures,—having by his rod corrected, and by his staff supported him, will, he humbly trusts, guide him through the dark valley of the shadow of death, and safely land him on the peaceful shores of everlasting rest.

TRAGEDIES.

PREFACE TO THE TRAGEDIES.

I AM desirous to anticipate a censure which the critical reader will be ready to bring forward, on the apparent inconsistency between the contents of the latter part of this volume, composed of dramatic pieces, and several sentiments not unfrequently introduced in some of my writings, respecting the dangerous tendency of certain public amusements, in which dramatic entertainments will be naturally included The candid reader will be able to solve the paradox when it is intimated at what different periods of life these different pieces were written. The dates, if they were regularly preserved, would explain that the seeming disagreement does not involve a contradiction, as it proceeds not from an inconsistency, but from a revolution in the sentiments of the author.

From my youthful course of reading, and early habits of society and conversation, aided, perhaps, by that natural but secret bias which the inclination gives to the judgment, I had been led to entertain that common, but, as I must now think, delusive and groundless hope, that the stage, under certain regulations, might be converted into a school of virtue ; and thus, like many others, inferred, by a seemingly reasonable conclusion, that though a bad play would always be a bad thing, yet the representation of a good one might become not only harmless, but useful ; and that it required nothing more than a correct judgment and a critical selection, to transform a pernicious pleasure into a profitable entertainment.

On these grounds (while, perhaps, as was intimated above, it was nothing more than the indulgence of a propensity), I was led to flatter myself it might be rendering that inferior service to society which the fabricator of safe and innocent amusements may reasonably be supposed to confer, to attempt some theatrical compositions, which, whatever other defects might be justly imputable to them, should at least be found to have been written on the side of virtue and modesty ; and which should neither hold out any corrupt image to the mind, nor any impure description to the fancy.

As the following pieces were written and performed at an early period of my life, under the above impressions, I feel it a kind of duty (imploring pardon for the unavoidable egotism to which it leads), not to send them afresh into the world in this collection, without prefixing to them a candid declaration of my altered view. In so doing, I am fully aware that I equally subject myself to the opposite censures of two different classes of readers, one of which will think that the best evidence of my sincerity would have been the suppression of the tragedies themselves, while the other will reprobate the change of sentiment which gives birth to the qualifying preface.

I should, perhaps, have been inclined to adopt the first of these two opinions, had it not occurred to me that the suppression would be thought disingenuous ; and had I not been also desirous of grounding on the publication, though in a very cursory manner, my sentiments on the general tendency of the drama ; for it appeared but fair and candid to include in this view my own compositions ; and thus, in some measure, though without adverting to them, to involve myself in the general object of my own animadversions.

I am not, even now, about to controvert the assertion of some of the ablest critics, that a well-written tragedy is, perhaps, one of the noblest efforts of the human mind—I am not, even now, about to deny, that of all public amusements it is the most interesting, the most intellectual, and the most accommodated to the tastes and capacities of a rational being ; nay, that it is almost the only one which has *mind* for its object ; which has the combined advantage of addressing itself to the imagination, the judgment, and the heart ; that it is the only public diversion which calls out the higher energies of the understanding in the composition, and awakens the most lively and natural feelings of the heart in the representation.

With all this decided superiority in point of mental pleasure which the stage possesses over every other species of public entertainment, it is not to be wondered at that its admirers and advocates, even the most respectable, should cherish a hope, that, under certain restrictions, and under an improved form, it might be made to contribute to instruction as well as to pleasure ; and it is on this plausible ground that we have heard so many ingenious defences of this species of amusement.

What the stage might be under another and an imaginary state of things, it is not very easy for us to know, and therefore not very important to inquire. Nor is it, indeed, the soundest logic

to argue on the possible goodness of a thing, which, in the present circumstances of society, is doing positive evil, from the imagined good that thing might be conjectured to produce in a supposed state of unattainable improvement. Would it not be more safe and simple to determine our judgment as to the character of the thing in question, on the more visible, and therefore more rational grounds, of its actual state, and from the effects which it is known to produce in that state?

For, unfortunately, this Utopian good cannot be produced, until not only the stage itself has undergone a complete purification, but until the audience shall be purified also. For we must first suppose a state of society in which the spectators will be disposed to relish all that is pure, and to reprobate all that is corrupt, before the system of a pure and uncorrupt theatre can be adopted with any reasonable hope of success. There must always be a congruity between the taste of the spectator and the nature of the spectacle, in order to effect that point of union which can produce pleasure: for it must be remembered that people go to a play, not to be *instructed*, but to be *pleased*. As we do not send the blind to an exhibition of pictures, nor the deaf to a concert, so it would be leaving the projected plan of a pure stage in a state of imperfection, unless the general corruption of human nature itself were so reformed as to render the amusements of a perfectly purified stage palatable If the sentiments and passions exhibited were no longer accommodated to the sentiments and passions of the audience, corrupt nature would soon withdraw itself from the vapid and inappropriate amusement; and *thin*, I will not say *empty* benches, would too probably be the reward of the conscientious reformer.

Far be it from me to wish to restore that obsolete rubbish of ignorance and folly with which the monkish legends furnished out the rude materials of our early drama: I mean those uncouth pieces, in which, under the titles of *mysteries* and *moralities*, the most sacred persons were introduced as interlocutors; in which events too solemn for exhibition, and subjects too awful for detail, were brought before the audience with a formal gravity more offensive than levity itself. The superstitions of the cloister were considered as suitable topics for the diversions of the stage; and celestial intelligences, uttering the sentiments and language, and blended with the buffooneries, of Bartholomew fair, were regarded as appropriate subjects of merrimaking for a holyday audience. But from this holy mummery, at which piety, taste, and common sense, would be equally revolted, I return to the existing state of things.*

I have never perused any of those treatises, excellent as some of them are said to be, which pious divines have written against the pernicious tendency of theatrical entertainments. The convictions of my mind have arisen solely from experience and observation. I shall not, therefore, go over the well-trodden ground of those who have inveighed, with too much justice, against the immoral lives of too many stage professors, allowing always for some very honourable exceptions. I shall not remark on the gross and palpable corruptions of those plays which are obviously written with an open disregard to all purity and virtue: nor shall I attempt to show whether any very material advantage would arise to the vain and the dissipated, were they to exclude the theatre from its turn in their undiscriminated round of promiscuous pleasure. But I would coolly and respectfully address a few words to those many worthy and conscientious persons, who would not, perhaps, so early and incautiously expose their youthful offspring to the temptations of an amusement of which they themselves could be brought to see and to feel the existence.

The question, then, which with great deference I would propose, is not whether those who risk every thing may not risk this also; but whether the more correct and considerate Christian might not find it worth while to consider if the amusement in question be entirely compatible with his avowed character? whether it be entirely consistent with the clearer views of one who professes to live in the sure and certain hope of that immortality which is brought to light by the gospel?

For, however weighty the arguments in favour of the superior *rationality* of plays may be found in the scale, when a rational being puts one amusement in the balance against another; however fairly he may exalt the stage against other diversions, as being more adapted to a man of sense; yet this, perhaps, will not quite vindicate it in the opinion of the more scrupulous Christian, who will not allow himself to think that of two evils *either* may be chosen. *His* amusements must be blameless, as well as ingenious; safe, as well as rational; moral, as well as intellectual They must have nothing in them which may be likely to excite any of the tempers which it is his daily task to subdue; any of the passions which it is his constant business to keep in order. *His* chosen amusements must not deliberately add to the "weight" which he is commanded "to lay aside;" they should not irritate the "besetting sin" against which he is struggling; they should not obstruct that "spiritual mindedness" which he is told "is life and peace;" they should not inflame that "lust of the flesh, that lust of the eye, and that pride of life," which he is forbidden to gratify. A religious person who occasionally indulges in an amusement not consonant to his general views and pursuits, inconceivably increases his own difficulties by whet-

* An enthusiast to the literature of my own country, and so jealous of its fame as grudgingly to allow its comparative inferiority in any one instance, I am yet compelled to acknowledge, that, as far as my slender reading enables me to form a judgment, the English dramatic poets are in general more licentious than those of most other countries. In that profligate reign,

"When all the Muses were debauched at court,"

the stage attained its highest degree of dissoluteness. Mr Garrick did a great deal towards its purification. It is said not to have since kept the ground it then gained.

ting tastes and exciting appetites, which it will cut him out so much work to counteract, as will greatly overbalance, in a conscientious mind, the short and trivial enjoyment. I speak now on the mere question of pleasure. Nay, the more keen his relish for the amusement, the more exquisite his discernment of the beauties of composition or the graces of action may be, the more prudent he may perhaps find it to deny himself the gratification which is enjoyed at the slightest hazard of his higher interests; a gratification which to him will be the more dangerous, in proportion as it is more poignantly felt.

A Christian, in our days, is seldom called, in his ordinary course, to great and signal sacrifices, to very striking and very ostensible renunciations; but he is daily called to a quiet, uniform, constant series of self-denial in small things. A dangerous and bewitching, especially if it be not a disreputable pleasure, may perhaps have a just place among those sacrifices: and, if he be really in earnest, he will not think it too much to renounce such petty enjoyments, were it only from the single consideration that it is well to seize every little occasion which occurs of evidencing to himself that he is constantly on the watch; and of proving to the world, that in small things, as well as in great, he is a follower of Him who "pleased not himself

Little, unobserved, and unostentatious abstinences, are among the silent deeds of his daily warfare. And whoever brings himself to exercise this habitual self-denial, even in doubtful cases, will soon learn, from happy experience, that in many instances abstinence is much more easily practised than temperance. There is in this case no excited sensibility to allay; there is no occasional remorse to be quieted; there is no lost ground to be recovered; no difficult backing out, only to get again to the same place where we were before. This observation adopted into practice might, it is presumed, effectually abolish the qualifying language of many of the more *sober* frequenters of the theatre, "that they go but *seldom*, and never but to a *good* play." We give these moderate and discreet persons all due praise for comparative sobriety. But while they *go at all*, the principle is the same; for they sanction, by going sometimes, a diversion which is not to be defended on strict Christian principles. Indeed, their acknowledging that it should be but sparingly frequented, probably arises from a conviction that it is not *quite* right.

I have already remarked that it is not the object of this address to pursue the usual track of attacking bad plays, of which the more prudent and virtuous seldom vindicate the principle, though they do not always scrupulously avoid attending the exhibition. I impose rather on myself the unpopular task of animadverting on the dangerous effects of those which come under the description of good plays; for from those chiefly arises the danger (if danger there be), to good people.

Now, with all the allowed superiority justly ascribed to pieces of a better cast, it does not seem to be a complete justification of the amusement, that the play in question is more chaste in the sentiment, more pure in the expression, and more moral in the tendency, than those which are avowedly objectionable; though I readily concede all the degrees of distinction, and very important they are, between such compositions and those of the opposite character. But the point for which I am contending is of another and of a distinct nature; namely, that there will, generally speaking, still remain, even in tragedies, otherwise the most unexceptionable, provided they are sufficiently impassioned to produce a powerful effect on the feelings, and have spirit enough to deserve to become popular; there will still remain an essential radical defect. What I insist on is, that there almost inevitably runs through the whole web of the tragic drama (for to this least blameable half of stage composition I confine my remarks, as against comedy still stronger objections may be urged), a prominent thread of false principle. It is generally the leading object of the poet to erect a standard of honour in direct opposition to the standard of Christianity; and this is not done subordinately, incidentally, occasionally; but worldly honour is the very soul, and spirit, and lifegiving principle of the drama. Honour is the religion of tragedy. It is her moral and political law. Her dictates form its institutes. Fear and shame are the capital crimes in her code. Against these, all the eloquence of her most powerful pleaders, against these her penal statutes, pistol, sword, and poison, are in full force. Injured honour can only be vindicated at the point of the sword; the stains of injured reputation can only be washed out in blood. Love, jealousy, hatred, ambition, pride, revenge, are too often elevated into the rank of splendid virtues, and form a dazzling system of worldly morality, in direct contradiction to the spirit of that religion whose characteristics are "charity, meekness, peaceableness, longsuffering, gentleness, forgiveness." "The fruits of the Spirit" and the fruits of the stage, if the parallel were followed up, as it might easily be. would perhaps exhibit as pointed a contrast as human imagination could conceive.

I by no means pretend to assert that religion is excluded from tragedies; it is often incidentally introduced; and many a period is beautifully turned, and many a moral is exquisitely pointed, with the finest sentiments of piety. But the single grains of this counteracting principle, scattered up and down the piece, do not extend their antiseptic property in a sufficient degree to preserve from corruption the body of a work, the general spirit and leading tempers of which, as was said above, are evidently not drawn from that meek religion, the very essence of which consists in "casting down high imaginations:" while, on the other hand, the leaven of the predominating evil secretly works and insinuates itself, till the whole mass becomes impregnated by the pervading principle. Now, if the directing principle be unsound, the virtues growing out of it will be unsound also; and no subordinate merit, no collateral excellences, can operate with effectual potency against

an evil which is of prime and fundamental force and energy, and which forms the very essence of the work.

A learned and witty friend, who thought differently on this subject, once asked me if I went so far as to think it necessary to try the merit of a song or a play by the ten commandments. To this may we not venture to answer, that neither a song nor a play should at least contain any thing hostile to the ten commandments. That, if harmless merriment be not expected to advance religion, we must take care that it do not oppose it; that if we concede that our amusements are not expected to make us better than we are, ought we not to condition that they do not make us worse than they find us? If so, then, whatever pleasantry of idea, whatever gayety of sentiment, whatever airiness of expression we innocently admit, should we not jealously watch against any unsoundness in the general principle, any mischief in the prevailing tendency?

We cannot be too often reminded, that we are, to an inconceivable degree, the creatures of habit. Our tempers are not principally governed, nor our characters formed, by single marked actions; nor is the colour of our lives often determined by prominent, detached circumstances; but the character is gradually moulded by a series of seemingly insignificant but constantly recurring practices, which, incorporated into our habits, become part of ourselves.

Now, as these lesser habits, if they take a wrong direction, silently and imperceptibly eat out the very heart and life of vigorous virtue, they will be almost more sedulously watched by those who are careful to keep their consciences tenderly alive to the perception of sin (however they may elude the attention of ordinary Christians), than actions which deter by bold and decided evil.

When it is recollected how many young men pick up their habits of thinking, and their notions of morality, from the playhouse, it is not perhaps going too far to suspect, that the principles and examples exhibited on the stage may contribute in their full measure and proportion towards supplying a sort of regular aliment to the appetite (how dreadfully increased!) for duelling, and even suicide. For, if religion teaches, and experience proves, the immense importance to our tempers and morals of a regular attendance on public worship, which attendance is only required of us one day in a week; and if it be considered how much the heart and mind of the attentive hearer become gradually imbued with the principles infused by this stated, though unfrequent attendance; who, that knows any thing of the nature of the human heart, will deny how much more deep and lasting will be the impression likely to be made by a far more frequent attendance at those places where sentiments of a direct contrary tendency are exhibited; exhibited too, with every addition which can charm the imagination and captivate the senses. Once in a week, it may be, the young minds are braced by the invigorating principles of a strict and self-denying religion: on the intermediate nights, their good resolutions (if such they have made), are melted down with all that can relax the soul, and dispose it to yield to the temptations against which it was the object of the Sunday's lecture to guard and fortify it. In the one case, there is every thing held out which can inflame or sooth corrupt nature, in opposition to those precepts which, in the other case, were directed to subdue it. And this one grand and important difference between the two cases should never be overlooked, that religious instruction, applied to the human heart, is seed sown in an uncultivated soil, where much is to be cleared, to be broken up, and to be rooted out, before good fruit will be produced: whereas the theatrical seed, by lighting on the fertile soil prepared by nature for the congenial implantation, is likely to shoot deep, spread wide, and bring forth fruit in abundance.

But, to drop all metaphor—They are told—and from whose mouth do they hear it?—that "blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek, and the peacemakers." Will not these, and such like humbling propositions, delivered one day in seven *only*, in all the sober and beautiful simplicity of our church, with all the force of truth indeed, but with all its plainness also, be more than counterbalanced by the speedy and much more frequent recurrence of the nightly exhibition, whose precise object it too often is, not *only* to preach, but to personify doctrines in diametrical and studied opposition to poverty of spirit, to purity, to meekness, forbearance, and forgiveness? Doctrines, not simply expressed, as those of the Sunday are, in the naked form of axioms, principles, and precepts, but realized, imbodied, made alive, furnished with organs, clothed, decorated, brought into lively discourse, into interesting action; enforced with all the energy of passion, adorned with all the graces of language, and exhibited with every aid of emphatical delivery, every attraction of appropriate gesture. To such a complicated temptation is it wise, voluntarily, studiously, unnecessarily, to expose frail and erring creatures? Is not the conflict too severe? Is not the competition too unequal?

It is pleaded by the advocates for church music, that the organ and its vocal accompaniments assist devotion, by enlisting the senses on the side of religion; and it is justly pleaded as an argument in favour of both, because the affections may fairly and properly derive every honest aid from any thing which helps to draw them off from the world to God. But is it not equally true, that the same species of assistance, in a wrong direction, will produce an equally forcible effect in its way, and at least equally contribute in drawing off the soul from God to the world? I do not presume to say that the injury will be inevitable, much less that it will be irretrievable; but I dare repeat, that it is exposing feeble virtue to a powerful temptation; and to a hazard so great, that were the same reason applied to any worldly subject, it would be thought a folly to venture on any undertaking where the chances against our coming off unhurt were so obviously against us. Besides, if we may pursue the doctrine of chances a little farther, that is at best

playing a most unprofitable game, where, if we even could be sure that nothing would be lost, it is clear to demonstration that nothing *can* be gained; so that the certain risk is not even counterbalanced by the possible success.

It is not in point to the present design to allude to the multitude of theatrical sentiments which seem to be written as if in avowed opposition to such precepts as "Swear not at all:" "He that looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery in his heart," &c. &c. We are willing to allow that this last offence, at least, is generally, I would it were invariably, confined to those more incorrect dramas which we do not now profess to consider. Yet it is to be feared we should not find many pieces (are we sure we can find one?) entirely exempt from the first heavy charge. And it is, perhaps, one of the most invincible objections to many tragedies, otherwise not very exceptionable, that the awful and tremendous name of the infinitely glorious God is shamefully, and almost incessantly, introduced in various scenes, both in the way of asseveration and of invocation.

Besides, the terms *good* and *bad* play are relative; for we are so little exact in our general definitions, that the character given to the piece often takes its colour from the character of him who gives it. Passages which to the decent moral man (him, I mean, who is decent and moral on mere worldly principles) are to the "purged eye" of a Christian disgusting by their vanity, and offensive by their levity, to speak in the gentlest terms.

But more especially the prime animating spirit of many of our more decorous dramas seems to furnish a strong contrast to the improved and enlarged comment of our Saviour in the New Testament, on the divine prohibition against murder in the Old, in the wo denounced against anger, as containing in itself the seed and principle of murder; anger, and its too usual concomitant, revenge, being the main spring on which some of our best tragedies turns.

The eloquent apologies, and the elaborate vindication of the crimes resulting from the point of honour and the dread of shame, and with such apologies and vindications some of our most approved pieces abound, too temptingly invite the high unbroken spirit of a warm youth, from admiring such sentiments to adopt them; and he is liable to be stimulated first to the commission of the crime, and, after he has committed it, to the hope of having his reputation cleared, by the perpetual eulogies these flattering scenes bestow on rash and intemperate bravery; on the *dignity* of that spirit which cannot brook an insult; and on that *generous* sense of wounded honour which is ever on the watch to revenge itself. And when he hears the bursts of applause with which these sallies of resentment, these vows of revenge, these determinations to destroy or be destroyed, this solemn obtesting the great Judge of hearts to witness the innocence of—perhaps a very criminal action or intention;—when, I say, a hotheaded young man witnesses the enthusiasm of admiration which such expressions excite in a transported audience, will it not operate as a kind of stimulus to him to adopt a similar conduct, should he ever be placed in similar circumstances? and will it not furnish him with a sort of criterion how such maxims would be received, and such conduct approved, in real life? For the danger does not lie merely in his hearing such sentiments delivered from the stage, but also in seeing how favourably they are received by the audience; received, too, by those persons who, should he realize these sentiments, would probably be the arbiters of his conduct. These are to him a kind of anticipated jury. The scene is, as it were, the rehearsal of an acquittal at the bar of that world whose tribunal is, perhaps, unhappily for him, considered as his last appeal; for it is not probably hazarding too much to conclude, that by the sort of character we are considering, human opinion will be looked upon as the highest motive of action, human praise as the highest reward, and human censure as an evil to be deprecated, even by the loss of his soul.

If one of the most virtuous of poets and of men, by the cool, deliberate, argumentative manner in which he makes his Roman hero destroy himself; this hero, too, a pagan, consistently illustrating by this action an historical fact, and acting in a natural conformity to his own stoical principles;—if, I say, under all these palliating circumstances, the ingenious sophistry by which the poet was driven to mitigate the crime of suicide, in order to accommodate the sentiment to the real character of his hero,—if this Christian poet, even to his own private friend and literary associate, could appear, by the specious reasoning of his famous soliloquy, to vindicate self-murder, so that the unhappy Budgell exclaimed, when falling by his own hand,

> "What Cato did, and Addison approv'd,
> Must sure be right:——"

If, I say, under all the extenuating circumstances here detailed, such a dreadful effect could be produced from a cause so little expected or intended by its author to produce it, how much more probably are similar ill consequences likely to arise from similar causes in the hands of a poet less guarded and worse principled; and whose heroes have, perhaps, neither the apology of acknowledged paganism, nor the sanction of historic truth? For Addison, who in general has made his piece a vehicle of the noblest and most patriotic sentiments, could not avoid making his catastrophe just what he has made it, without violating a notorious fact, and falsifying the character he exhibits.

Even in those plays in which the principles which false honour teaches are neither professedly inculcated nor vindicated; nay, where moreover the practices above alluded to, and especially the practice of duelling, are even reprobated in the progress of the piece; yet the hero who has

been reprieved from sin during four acts by the sage remonstrance of some interfering friend, or the imperious power of beauty; beauty, which is to a stage hero that restraining or impelling power which law, or conscience, or scripture, are to other men; still, in the conclusion, when the intrigue is dexterously completed, when the passion is worked up to its acme, and the valedictory scene is so near at hand that it becomes inconvenient to the poet that the impetuosity of his hero should be any longer restrained; when his own patience and the expostulating powers of his friend are both exhausted together, and he seasonably winds up the drama by stabbing either his worst enemy or his best benefactor, or, as it still more frequently happens, himself; still, notwithstanding his criminal catastrophe, the hero has been exhibited through all the preceding scenes as such a combination of perfections; his behaviour has been so brave and so generous (and bravery and generosity are two qualities which the world boldly stakes against both tables of the decalogue), that the youthful spectator, especially if he have that amiable warmth and sensibility of soul which lay him so peculiarly open to seduction, is too much tempted to consider as venial the sudden and unpremeditated crime to which the unresisted impulse of the moment may have driven so accomplished a character. And a little tame tag of morality, set to a few musical periods by the unimpassioned friend, is borne down, absorbed, lost, in the impetuous but too engaging character of the feeling, fiery hero; a character, the errors of which are now consummated by an act of murder, so affectingly managed, that censure is swallowed up in pity: the murderer is absolved by the weeping auditory, who are ready, *if not to justify the crime*, yet to vindicate the criminal. The drowsy moral at the close, slowly attempts to creep after the poison of the piece; but it creeps in vain; it can never expel that which it can never reach; for one stroke of feeling, one natural expression of the passions, be the principle right or wrong, carries away the affections of the auditor beyond any of the poet's force of reasoning to control. And they know little of the power of the dramatic art, or of the conformation of the human mind, who do not know that the heart of the feeling spectator is always at the command of the passions in the hand of a true poet; who snatches him with uncontrolled dominion

"To Thebes and Athens when he will, and where."

Now, to counteract the bias given by the passions, *all* the flowers of rhetoric, all the flights of mere poetry, and all the blunted weapons of logic united, are ineffectual. Of course, the concluding antidote never defeats the mischief of the piece; the effect of the smooth moral is instantly obliterated, while that of the indented *passion* is perhaps indelible.

Let me now for a moment turn to the younger part of that sex, to whose service I have generally devoted my principal attention. A virtuous young woman, it will be said, who has been correctly educated, will turn with abhorrence from the unchaste scenes of a loose play. It is indeed so to be hoped: and yet many plays which really deserve that character, escape that denomination But I concede this point, and proceed to the more immediate object of my animadversions. The remark may be thought preposterous, should I observe, that, to a chaste and delicate young mind, there is in *good* plays one danger which, I will venture to assert, is almost more formidable than that which is often attached to pieces more obviously censurable. The more refined and delicate the passion of love is made to appear, the more insinuating, and, of course, the more dangerous, will the exquisite and reiterated representation of that passion be found Now, love being the grand business of plays, those young ladies who are frequently attending them, will be liable to nourish a feeling which is often strong enough of itself, without this constant supply of foreign fuel, namely, that love is the grand business of life also. If the passion be avowedly illicit, her well-instructed conscience will arm her with scruples, and her sense of decorum will set her on her guard. While, on the other hand, the greater the purity with which the passion is exhibited, provided the exhibition be very touching and warm, the more deep and irresistible will be its effect on a tender and inexperienced heart; nay, the more likely will the passion acted on the stage be to excite a corresponding passion in the heart of the young spectatress. If she have not yet felt the passion she sees so finely portrayed, she will wish to feel it; and, the not having felt it, she will consider as something wanting to the perfection of her nature. She will ascribe the absence of it to a defect in her own heart which must be supplied, or to some untowardness in her own circumstances which must be removed. Thus her imagination will do the work of the passions, and the fancy will anticipate the feelings of the heart: the source this, of some of the most fatal disorders in the female character!

Now, to captivate such a tender and affectionate heart as that we are considering, the semblance of virtue is necessary; for, while she will conceive of criminal passion as censurable, she will be equally apt to consider even the most imprudent passion as justifiable, so long as the idea of absolute crime is kept at a distance. If the love be represented as avowedly vicious, instead of lending herself to the illusion, she will allow it ought to be sacrificed to duty; but if she thinks it innocent, she persuades herself that every duty should be sacrificed to it. Nay, she will value herself in proportion as she thinks she could imitate the heroine who is able to love with so much violence and so much purity at the same time. By frequent repetition, especially if there be a taste for romance and poetry in the innocent young mind, the feelings are easily transplanted from the theatre to the closet; they are made to become a standard of action, and are brought home as the regulators of life and manners. The heart being thus filled with the pleasures of love a new era takes place in her mind, and she carries about with her an aptitude

to receive any impression herself, and a constantly waking and active desire to make this impression in return. The plain and sober duties of life begin to be uninteresting; she wishes them to be diversified with events, and enlivened by heroes. Though she retains her virtue, her sobermindedness is impaired; for she longs to be realizing those pains and pleasures, and to be acting over those scenes and sacrifices, which she so often sees represented. If the evils arising from frequent scenic representations to a young woman were limited to this single inconvenience, that it makes her sigh to be a heroine, it would be a strong reason why a discreet and pious mother should be slow in introducing her to them.

I purposely forbear, in this place, repeating any of those higher arguments drawn from the utter irreconcileableness of this indulgence of the fancy, of this gratification of the senses, this unbounded roving of the thoughts, with the divine injunction of bringing "every thought into the obedience of Christ."

But it will be said, perhaps, all this rigour may be very suitable to enthusiasts and fanatics, to the vulgar, the retired, and the obscure: but would you exclude the more liberal and polished part of society from the delight and instruction which may be derived from the great masters of the human heart, from Shakspeare particularly?

On this subject I think myself called upon to offer my opinion (such as it is) as unreservedly as I have taken the liberty of doing on the points considered in the former part of this preface. I think, then, that there is a substantial difference between seeing and reading a dramatic composition; and that the objections which lie so strongly against the one, are not, at least in the same degree, applicable to the other. Or, rather, while there is an essential and inseparable danger attendant on dramatic exhibitions, let the matter of the drama be ever so innocent, the danger in *reading* a play arises solely from the *sentiments* contained in it.

To read a moral play is little different from reading any other innocent poem; the dialogue form being a mere accident, and no way affecting the moral tendency of the piece. Nay, some excellent poets have chosen that form on account of its peculiar advantages, even when the nature of their subjects precluded the idea of theatrical exhibition. Thus Buchanan wrote his fine tragedies of "The Baptist," and "Jephthah," Grotius that of "Christ Suffering," and Milton that of "Samson Agonistes;" not to name the "Joseph," the "Bethulia Delivered," and some other pieces of the amiable Metastasio. Nothing, therefore, could be more unreasonable, than to proscribe from the study or the closet well-selected dramatic poetry. It may be read with safety, because it can there be read with soberness. The most animated speeches subside into comparative tameness, and, provided they are perfectly pure, produce no ruffle of the passions, no agitation of the senses, but merely afford a pleasant, and, it may be, a not unsalutary exercise to the imagination.

In all the different kinds of poetry, there will be a necessity for selection; and where could safer poetical amusement be found than in the works of Racine, whose Athalia, in particular (as we have had occasion elsewhere to observe), most happily illustrates an interesting piece of scripture history, at the same time that, considered as a composition, it is itself a model of poetical perfection. I may mention, as an exquisite piece, the Masque of Comus, and, as interesting poems in the dramatic form also, the Caractacus, and Elfrida, of Mason; the passing over which pieces in the volumes of that virtuous poet, merely because they are in a dramatic form, would be an instance of scrupulosity which one might venture to say no well-informed conscience could suggest.

Let neither, then, the devout and scrupulous, on the one hand, nor the captious caviller, on the other, object to this distinction; I mean between *reading* a dramatic composition, and *seeing* a theatrical exhibition, as if it were fanciful or arbitrary. In the latter, is it the mere repetition of the speeches which implies danger? is it this which attracts the audience? No: were even the best reader, if he did not bring in aid the novelty of a foreign language, to read the whole play himself, without scenic decorations, without dress, without gesticulation, would such an exhibition be numerously, or for any length of time, attended? What then chiefly draws the multitude? It is the semblance of real action which is given to the piece, by different persons supporting the different parts, and by their dress, their tones, their gestures, heightening the representation into a kind of enchantment. It is the concomitant pageantry, it is the splendour of the spectacle, and even the show of the spectators:—these are the circumstances which altogether fill the theatre—which altogether produce the effect—which altogether create the danger. These give a pernicious force to sentiments which, when read, merely explain the mysterious action of the human heart, but which, when thus uttered, thus accompanied, become contagious and destructive. These, in short, make up a scene of temptation and seduction, of overwrought voluptuousness and unnerving pleasure, which surely ill accords with "working out our salvation with fear and trembling," or with that frame of mind which implies that "the world is crucified to us, and we to the world."

I trust I have sufficiently guarded against the charge of inconsistency, even though I venture to hazard an opinion that, in company with a judicious friend or parent, many scenes of Shakspeare may be read not only without danger, but with improvement. Far be it from me to wish to abridge the innocent delights of life, where they may be enjoyed with benefit to the understanding, and without injury to the principles. Women, especially, whose walk in life is so circumscribed, and whose avenues of information are so few, may, I conceive, learn to know the

world with less danger, and to study human nature with more advantage, from the *perusal* of selected parts of this incomparable genius, than from most other attainable sources. I would in this view consider Shakspeare as a philosopher as well as poet, and I have been surprised to hear many pious people universally confound and reprobate this poet with the common herd of dramatists and novelists. To his acute and sagacious mind every varied position of the human heart, every shade of discrimination in the human character, all the minuter delicacies, all the exquisite touches, all the distinct affections, all the contending interests, all the complicated passions of the heart of man, seem, as far as is allowed to human inspection to discern them, to be laid open Though destitute himself of the aids of literature, and of the polish of society, he seems to have possessed by intuition all the advantages that various learning and elegant society can bestow; and to have combined the warmest energies of passion, and the boldest strokes of imagination, with the justest proprieties of reasoning, and the exactest niceties of conduct. He makes every description a picture, and every sentiment an axiom. He seems to have known how every being which *did* exist would speak and act under every supposed circumstance and every possible situation; and how every being which did *not* exist must speak and act, if ever he were to be called into actual existence.

From the discriminated, the guarded, the qualified perusal of such an author, it would be impossible, nor does it appear to be necessary, to debar accomplished and elegantly educated young persons. Let not the above eulogium be censured as too strong or too bold. In almost every library they will find his writings; in almost every work of taste and criticism, the young reader will not fail to meet the panegyric of Shakspeare. The frequent allusions to him, and the beautiful quotations from him, will, if they light upon a corresponding taste, inflame it with a curiosity to peruse all his works. Now, would it not be safer to anticipate the danger which might result from a private and unqualified perusal, for the parent to select such pieces as have in them the fewest of those corruptions, which truth must allow that Shakspeare possesses in common with other dramatic poets? For who will deny that all the excellences we have ascribed to him are debased by passages of offensive grossness? are tarnished with indelicacy, false taste, and vulgarity? This is not the place for a discussion of those faults, too obvious to be overlooked, too numerous to be detailed, too strong to be palliated. Let me, however, be permitted to observe, that though Shakspeare often disgusts by single passages and expressions (which I will not vindicate by ascribing them to the false taste of the age in which he wrote; for though that may extenuate the fault of the poet, it does not diminish the danger of the reader), yet perhaps the general tendency of his pieces is less corrupt than that of the pieces of almost any dramatist; and the reader rises from the perusal of Shakspeare without those distinct images of evil on his mind, without having his heart so dissolved by amatory scenes, or his mind so warped by corrupt reasoning, or his heart so inflamed with seducing principles, as he will have experienced from other writers of the same description, however exempt *their* works may be from the more broad and censurable vices of composition which disfigure many parts of Shakspeare. Lest I be misrepresented, let it be observed, that I am now distinguishing the general *result* arising from the *tendency* of his pieces, from the effect of particular passages; and this is the reason why a discriminated perusal is so important. For, after all, the *general disposition of mind* with which we rise from the reading of a work, is the best criterion of its utility or mischief. To the tragedies of Shakspeare, too, belongs this superiority, that his pieces being faithful histories of the human heart, and portraits of the human character, love is only introduced as one passion among many which enslave mankind; whereas by most other play writers, it is treated as the monopolizing tyrant of the heart.

It is not because I consider Shakspeare as a correct moralist and an unerring guide, that I suggest the advantage of having the youthful curiosity allayed by a partial perusal, and under prudent inspection: but it is for this very different reason, lest, by having that curiosity stimulated by the incessant commendation of this author, with which both books and conversation abound, young persons should be excited to devour in secret an author who, if devoured in the gross, will not fail, by many detached passages, to put a delicate reader in the situation of his own ancient Pistol when eating the leek; that is, to swallow and execrate at the same time.

But to conclude,—which I will do with a recapitulation of the principal objects already touched upon. That I may not be misunderstood, let me repeat that this preface is not addressed to the gay and dissolute; to such as profess themselves to be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;"—but it is addressed to the more soberminded; to those who believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, who wish to be enlightened by its doctrines, to be governed by its precepts, and who profess to be "seeking a better country, even a heavenly one" The question then which we have been asking is, whether the stage, in its present state, be a proper amusement for such a character? What it would be, if perfectly reformed, and cast into the Christian mould, we have considered as another question, which it will be time enough to answer when the reformation itself takes place.

Neither (as has been observed) is it to the present purpose to insist that theatrical amusements are the most *rational*; for the question we have undertaken to agitate is, whether they are *blameless*? In this view, the circumstance of going but *seldom* cannot satisfy a conscientious mind; for if the amusement be *right*, we may partake of it with moderation, as of other awful pleasures; if *wrong*, we should *never* partake of it.

Some individuals may urge that the amusements of the theatre never had the bad effects on their minds which they are said to have on the minds of others; but supposing this to be really the case (which however may admit of doubt), ought not such persons to reflect, that by their presence they sanction that which is obviously hurtful to others, and which must, if so, be displeasing to God?

The stage is by universal concurrence allowed to be no indifferent thing. The impressions it makes on the mind are deep and strong; deeper and stronger, perhaps, than are made by any other amusement. If then such impressions be in the general hostile to Christianity, the whole resolves itself into this short question—Should a Christian frequent it

[In addition to what has here been advanced on the subject of theatrical amusements, the editor hopes to be excused for inserting the conclusion of Jeremy Collier's "Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage:" printed in 1699.

"These entertainments are, as it were, literally renounced in baptism. They are the *vanities of the wicked world, and the works of the devil,* in the most open and emphatical signification. *What communion has light with darkness, and what concord has Christ with Belial?* Call you this diversion? can profaneness be such an irresistible delight? Does the crime of the performance make the spirit of the satisfaction, and is the scorn of Christianity the entertainment of Christians? Is it such a pleasure to hear the scriptures burlesqued? Is ribaldry so very obliging, and atheism so charming a quality? Are we indeed willing to quit the privilege of our nature, to surrender our charter of immortality, and throw up the pretences to another life? It may be so; but then we should do well to remember that NOTHING is not in our power. Our desires did not make us, neither can they unmake us. But I hope our wishes are not so mean, and that we have a better sense of the dignity of our being. And if so, how can we be pleased with those things which would degrade us into brutes, which ridicule our creed, and turn all our expectations into romance.

"And, after all, the jest on't is, these men would make us believe their design is virtue and reformation. In good time! they are likely to combat vice with success, who destroy the principles of good and evil! Take them at the best, and they do no more than expose a little humour and formality. But then, as the matter is managed, the correction is much worse than the fault. They laugh at pedantry and teach atheism; cure a pimple, and give the plague. I heartily wish they would have let us alone. To exchange virtue for behaviour, is a hard bargain. Is not plain honesty much better than hypocrisy well dressed? what's sight good for, without substance? what is a wellbred libertine, but a wellbred knave? One that can't prefer conscience to pleasure, without calling himself fool; and will sell his friend, or his father, if need be, for his convenience.

"In short: nothing can be more disserviceable to probity and religion than the management of the STAGE. It cherishes those passions, and rewards those vices, which 'tis the business of reason to discountenance It strikes at the root of principle, draws off the inclinations from virtue, and spoils good education. It is the most effectual means to emasculate people's spirits, and debauch their manners. How *many* of the unwary have these sirens devoured? and how often has the best blood been tainted with this infection? what disappointments of parents, what confusion in families, and what beggary in estates, have been hence occasioned? and, which is still worse, the mischief spreads daily, and the malignity grows more envenomed. The fever works up towards madness, and will scarcely endure to be touched. And what hope is there of health, when the patient strikes in with the disease, and flies in the face of the remedy? Can religion retrieve us? yes, when we don't despise it. But while our notions are naught, our lives will hardly be otherwise. What can the assistance of the church signify to those who are more ready to rally the preacher, than practise the sermon? to those who are overgrown with pleasure, and hardened in ill custom? who have neither patience to hear, nor conscience to take hold of? you may almost as well feed a man without a mouth, as give advice where there's no disposition to receive it. It is true, as long as there is life there's hope. Sometimes the force of argument, and the grace of God, and the anguish of affliction, may strike through the prejudice, and make their way into the soul. But these circumstances don't always meet, and then the case is extremely dangerous. For this miserable temper, we may thank the STAGE, in a great measure; and, therefore, if I mistake not, they have the least pretence to favour, and the most need of repentance of all men living."]

THE INFLEXIBLE CAPTIVE:

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.

AS IT WAS ACTED IN 1774, AT THE THEATRE ROYAL AT BATH.

"The man resolv'd, and steady to his trust,
Inflexible to ill, and obstinately just."

TO

THE HON. MRS. BOSCAWEN.

DEAR MADAM,

IT seems somewhat extraordinary, that although, with persons of great merit and delicacy, no virtue stands in higher estimation than truth; yet, in such an address as the present, there would be some danger of offending them, by a strict adherence to it: I mean, by uttering truths so generally acknowledged, that every one except the person addressed would acquit the writer of flattery. And it will be a singular circumstance to see a dedication without praise, to a lady possessed of every quality and accomplishment which can justly entitle her to it.

I am, dear madam, with great respect,
Your most obedient, and very obliged humble servant,
THE AUTHOR.

THE ARGUMENT.

AMONG the great names which have done honour to antiquity in general, and to the Roman Republic in particular, that of Marcus Attilius Regulus has, by the general consent of all ages, been considered as one of the most splendid, since he not only sacrificed his labours, his liberty, and his life, for the good of his country, but, by a greatness of soul almost peculiar to himself, contrived to make his very misfortunes contribute to that glorious end.

After the Romans had met with various successes in the first Punic war, under the command of Regulus, victory at length declared for the opposite party—the Roman army was totally overthrown, and Regulus himself taken prisoner by Xantippus, a Lacedæmonian general in the service of the Carthaginians: the victorious enemy, exulting in so important a conquest, kept him many years in close imprisonment, and loaded him with the most cruel indignities. They thought it was now in their power to make their own terms with Rome, and determined to send Regulus thither, with their ambassador, to negotiate a peace, or at least an exchange of captives, thinking he would gladly persuade his countrymen to discontinue a war which necessarily prolonged his captivity. They previously exacted from him an oath to return, should his embassy prove unsuccessful; at the same time giving him to understand, that he must expect to suffer a cruel death if he failed in it: this they artfully intimated, as the strongest motive for him to leave no means unattempted to accomplish their purpose.

At the unexpected arrival of this venerable hero, the Romans expressed the wildest transports of joy, and would have submitted to almost any conditions, to procure his enlargement; but Regulus, so far from availing himself of his influence with the senate to obtain any personal advantages, employed it to induce them to reject proposals so evidently tending to dishonour their country, declaring his fixed resolution to return to bondage and death, rather than violate his oath.

He at last extorted from them their consent; and departed amid the tears of his family, the importunities of his friends, the applauses of the senate, and the tumultuous opposition of the people: and, as a great poet of his own nation beautifully observes, "he embarked for Carthage as calm and unconcerned, as if, on finishing the tedious lawsuits of his clients, he was retiring to Venafrian fields, or the sweet country of Tarentum."

*** This piece is a pretty close imitation of the *Attilio Regolo* of Metastasio, but enlarged and extended into a tragedy of five acts. Historical truth has in general been followed, except in some less essential instances, particularly that of placing the return of Regulus to Rome posterior to the death of his wife. The writer herself never considered the plot as sufficiently bustling and dramatic for representation.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY THE REV. DR. LANGHORNE.

DEEP in the bosom of departed days,
Where the first gems of human glory blaze;
Where, crown'd with flowers, in wreaths immortal dress'd,
The sacred shades of ancient virtue rest;
With joy they search, who joy can feel, to find
Some honest reason still to love mankind.
There the fair foundress of the scene to-night,
Explores the paths that dignify delight;
The regions of the mighty dead pervades;
The sibyl she that leads us to the shades.
O may each blast of ruder breath forbear
To waft her light leaves on the ruthless air;
Since she, as heedless, strives not to maintain
This tender offspring of her teeming brain!
For this poor birth was no provision made,
A flower that sprung and languish'd in the shade.
On Avon's banks, forsaken and forlorn,
This careless mother left her elder born;
And though unlike what Avon hail'd of yore,
Those giant sons that Shakspeare's banners bore,
Yet may we yield this little offspring grace,
And love the last and least of such a race.
Shall the strong scenes, where senatorial Rome
Mourn'd o'er the rigour of a patriot's doom;
Where melting nature, aw'd by virtue's eye,
Hid the big drop, and held the bursting sigh,
Where all that majesty of soul can give,
Truth, honour, pity, fair affection live:
Shall scenes like these, the glory of an age,
Gleam from the press, nor triumph on the stage?
Forbid it, Britons! and, as Romans brave,
Like Romans boast one citizen to save.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

REGULUS.—*Mr. Henderson.*
PUBLIUS, his son.—*Mr. Dimond.*
MANLIUS, the Consul.—*Mr. Blissett.*
LICINIUS, a Tribune.—*Mr. Brown.*
HAMILCAR, the Carthaginian Ambassador.—*Mr. Rowbotham.*
ATTILIA, daughter of Regulus.—*Miss Mansell.*
BARCE, a Carthaginian captive.—*Miss Wheeler.*
Guards, Lictors, People, &c.

Scene.—Near the Gates of Rome.

ACT I.

SCENE—*A Hall in the Consul's Palace.*

Enter LICINIUS, ATTILIA, *Lictors, and People.*

Lic. ATTILIA waiting here? Is't possible?
Is this a place for Regulus's daughter?
Just gods! must that incomparable maid
Associate here with Lictors and Plebeians?

Att. Yes, on this threshold patiently I wait
The consul's coming; I would make him blush
To see me here his suiter. O, Licinius,
This is no time for form and cold decorum;
Five lagging years have crept their tedious round,
And Regulus, alas! is still a slave;
A wretched slave, unpitied, and forgotten;
No other tribute paid his memory,
Than the sad tears of his unhappy child;
If *she* be silent, who will speak for Regulus?

Lic. Let not her sorrows make my fair unjust.
Is there in Rome a heart so dead to virtue,
That does not beat in Regulus's cause?
That wearies not the gods for his return?
That does not think all subjugated Afric,
A slender, unimportant acquisition,
If, in return for this extended empire,
The freedom of thy father be the purchase?
These are the feelings of imperial Rome;
My own, it were superfluous to declare.
For if *Licinius* were to weigh his merit,
That he's *thy father* were sufficient glory.
He was my leader, train'd me up to arms;
And, if I boast a spark of Roman honour,
I owe it to *his* precepts and *his* virtues.

Att. And yet I have not seen Licinius stir.

Lic. Ah! spare me thy reproaches—what, when late
A private citizen, could I attempt?
'Twas not the lust of power, or pride of rank,
Which made me seek the dignity of tribune;
No, my Attilia, but I fondly hop'd
'Twould strengthen and enforce the just request,
Which, as a *private* man, I *vainly* urg'd;
But now, the people's representative,
I shall *demand*, Attilia, to be heard.

Att. Ah! let us not too hastily apply
This dangerous remedy; I would not rouse
Fresh tumults 'twixt the people and the senate:
Each views with jealousy the idol, power,
Which, each possessing, would alike abuse.
What one demands, the other still denies.
Might *I* advise you, try a *gentler* method;
I know that every moment Rome expects
Th' ambassador of Carthage, nay, 'tis said
The conscript fathers are already met
To give him audience in Bellona's temple.
There might the consul at my suit, Licinius,
Propose the ransom of my captive father.

Lic. Ah! think, Attilia, who that consul is,
Manlius, thy father's rival, and his foe:
His ancient rival, and his foe profess'd:
To hope in him, my fair, were fond delusion.

Att. Yet tho' his rival, Manlius, is a *Roman:*
Nor will he think of private enmities,
Weigh'd in the balance with the good of Rome,
Let me at least make trial of his honour.

Lic. Be it so, my fair! but elsewhere make thy suit;
Let not the consul meet Attilia *here*,

Confounded with the refuse of the people.

Att. Yes, I will see him *here*, e'en *here*, Licinius.
Let *Manlius* blush, not *me*: *here* will I speak,
Here shall he answer me.

Lic. Behold, he comes.

Att. Do thou retire.

Lic. O, bless me with a look,
One parting look, at least.

Att. Know, my Licinius,
That at this moment I am all the *daughter*,
The filial feelings now possess my soul,
And other passions find no entrance there.

Lic. O sweet, yet powerful influence of virtue,
That charms though cruel, though unkind subdues,
And what was love exalts to admiration!
Yes, 'tis the privilege of souls like thine
To conquer most when least they aim at conquest.
Yet, ah! vouchsafe to think upon Licinius,
Nor fear to rob thy father of his due;
For surely virtue and the gods approve
Unwearied constancy and spotless love.
[*Exit* LICINIUS.

Enter MANLIUS.

Att. Ah! Manlius, stay, a moment stay, and hear me.

Man. I did not think to meet thee here, Attilia;
The place so little worthy of the guest.

Att. It would, indeed, have ill become Attilia,
While still her father was a Roman citizen;
But for the daughter of a slave to Carthage,
It surely is most fitting

Man. Say, Attilia,
What is the purpose of thy coming hither?

Att. What is the purpose, patience, pitying Heaven!
Tell me, how long, to Rome's eternal shame,
To fill with horror all the wond'ring world,
My father still must groan in Punic chains,
And waste the tedious hours in cruel bondage?
Days follow days, and years to years succeed,
And Rome forgets her hero, is content
That Regulus be a forgotten slave.
What is his crime? is it that he preferr'd
His country's profit to his children's good?
Is it th' unshaken firmness of his soul,
Just, uncorrupt, and, boasting, let me speak it,
Poor in the highest dignities of Rome?
Illustrious crime! O glorious poverty!

Man. But know, Attilia—

Att. O, have patience with me.
And can ungrateful *Rome* so soon forget?
Can those who breathe the air *he* breath'd forget
The great, the godlike virtues of my father?
There's not a part of Rome but speaks his praise.
The *streets*—thro' them the *hero* pass'd triumphant:
The *forum*—there the *legislator* plann'd
The wisest, purest laws—the senate-house—
There spoke the *patriot Roman*—there his voice
Secur'd the public safety: Manlius, yes;
The wisdom of his counsels match'd his valour.
Enter the *temples*—mount the *capitol*—
And tell me, Manlius, to what hand but *his*
They owe their trophies, and their ornaments,
Their foreign banners, and their boasted ensigns,
Tarentine, Punic, and Sicilian spoils?
Nay, e'en those lictors who precede thy steps,
This consul's purple which invests thy limbs,
All, all were Regulus's, were my father's.
And yet this hero, this exalted patriot,
This man of virtue, this immortal Roman,
In base requital for his services,
Is left to linger out a life in chains,
No honours paid him but a daughter's tears.
O Rome! O Regulus! O thankless citizens!

Man. Just are thy tears:—thy father well deserves them;
But know thy censure is unjust, Attilia.
The fate of Regulus is felt by all:
We know and mourn the cruel woes he suffers
From barbarous Carthage.

Att. Manlius, you mistake;
Alas! it is not Carthage which is barbarous;
'Tis Rome, ungrateful Rome, is the barbarian;
Carthage but punishes a foe profess'd,
But Rome betrays her hero and her father:
Carthage remembers how he slew her sons,
But Rome forgets the blood he shed for *her*:
Carthage revenges an acknowledged foe,
But Rome with basest perfidy rewards
The glorious hand that bound her brow with laurels.
Which now is the barbarian, Rome or Carthage!

Man. What can be done?

Att. A woman shall inform you.
Convene the senate; let them straight propose
A ransom, or exchange for Regulus,
To Africa's ambassador. Do this,
And heav'n's best blessings crown your days with peace.

Man. Thou speakest like a *daughter*, I, Attilia,
Must as a *consul* act; I must consult
The good of Rome, and with her good, her glory.
Would it not tarnish her unspotted fame,
To sue to Carthage on the terms thou wishest?

Att. Ah! rather own thou'rt still my father's foe.

Man. Ungen'rous maid! no fault of mine concurr'd
To his destruction. 'Twas the chance of war.
Farewell! ere this the senate is assembled—
My presence is requir'd.—Speak to the fathers,
And try to soften *their* austerity;
My rigour they may render vain, for know,
I am Rome's *consul*, not her *king*, Attilia.
[*Exit* MANLIUS *with the lictors*, &c.

Att. (*alone.*) This flattering hope, alas! has prov'd abortive.
One consul is our foe, the other absent.
What shall the sad Attilia next attempt?
Suppose I crave assistance from the people!
Ah! my unhappy father, on what hazards,
What strange vicissitudes, what various turns,
Thy life, thy liberty, thy all depends!

Enter BARCE (*in haste*).

Bar. Ah, my Attilia!

Att. Whence this eager haste?

Bar. Th' ambassador of Carthage is arriv'd.

Att. And why does *that* excite such wondrous transport?

Bar. I bring another cause of greater still.

Att. Name it, my Barce.

Bar. *Regulus* comes with him.

Att. My father! can it be?

Bar. Thy father—Regulus.
Att. Thou art deceiv'd, or thou deceiv'st thy friend.
Bar. Indeed I saw him not, but every tongue
Speaks the glad tidings.

Enter PUBLIUS

Att. See where Publius comes.
Pub. My sister, I'm transported! Oh Attilia,
He's here, our father—Regulus is come!
Att. I thank you, gods: O my full heart! where is he?
Hasten, my brother, lead, O lead me to him.
Pub. It is too soon: restrain thy fond impatience.
With Africa's ambassador he waits,
Until th' assembled senate give him audience.
Att. Where was he, Publius, when thou saw'st him first?
Pub. You know, in quality of Roman questor,
My duty 'tis to find a fit abode
For all ambassadors of foreign states.
Hearing the Carthaginian was arriv'd,
I hasten'd to the port, when, O just gods!
No foreigner, no foe, no African
Salutes my eye, but Regulus—my father!
Att. Oh mighty joy! too exquisite delight!
What said the hero? tell me, tell me all,
And ease my anxious breast.
Pub. Ere I arriv'd,
My father stood already on the shore,
Fixing his eyes with anxious eagerness,
As straining to descry the capitol.
I saw, and flew with transport to embrace him,
Pronounced with wildest joy the name of father—
With reverence seiz'd his venerable hand,
And would have kiss'd it; when the awful hero,
With that stern grandeur which made Carthage tremble,
Drew back—stood all collected in himself,
And said austerely, Know, thou rash young man,
That *slaves* in *Rome* have not the rights of *fathers*.
Then asked, if yet the senate was assembled,
And where? which having heard, without indulging
The fond effusions of his soul, or mine,
He suddenly retired. I flew with speed
To find the consul, but as yet, success
Attends not my pursuit. Direct me to him.
Bar. Publius, you'll find him in Bellona's temple.
Att. Then Regulus returns to Rome a slave!
Pub. Yes, but be comforted; I know he brings
Proposals for a peace; his will's his fate
Att. Rome may perhaps refuse to treat of peace.
Pub. Didst thou behold the universal joy
At his return, thou wouldst not doubt success.
There's not a tongue in Rome but, wild with transport,
Proclaims aloud that Regulus is come!
The streets are filled with thronging multitudes,
Pressing with eager gaze to catch a look.
The happy man who can descry him first,
Points him to his next neighbour, he to his;
Then what a thunder of applause goes round;
What music to the ear of filial love!
Attilia! not a Roman eye was seen,
But shed pure tears of exquisite delight.
Judge of my feelings by thy own, my sister.
By the large measure of thy fond affection,
Judge mine.
Att. Where is Licinius? find him out,
My joy is incomplete till he partakes it.
When doubts and fears have rent my anxious heart,
In all my woes he kindly bore a part:
Felt all my sorrows with a soul sincere,
Sigh'd as I sigh'd, and number'd tear for tear:
Now favouring heav'n my ardent vows has blest,
He shall divide the *transports* of my breast.
[*Exit* ATTILIA.
Pub. Barce, adieu!
Bar. Publius, a moment hear me.
Know'st thou the name of Africa's ambassador?
Pub. Hamilcar?
Bar. Son of Hanno?
Pub. Yes! the same.
Bar. Ah me! Hamilcar!—How shall I support it! (*aside*)
Pub. Ah, charming maid! the blood forsakes thy cheek:
Is he the rival of thy Publius? speak,
And tell me all the rigour of my fate.
Bar. Hear me, my lord. Since I have been thy slave,
Thy goodness, and the friendship of Attilia,
Have soften'd all the horrors of my fate.
Till now I have not felt the weight of bondage.
Till now—ah, Publius!—think me not ungrateful,
I would not wrong thee—I will be sincere—
I will expose the weakness of my soul
Know then, my lord—how shall I tell thee all?
Pub. Stop, cruel maid, nor wound thy Publius more;
I dread the fatal frankness of thy words:
Spare me the pain of knowing I am scorn'd;
And if thy heart's devoted to another,
Yet do not tell it me; in tender pity
Do not, my fair, dissolve the fond illusion,
The dear delightful visions I have form'd
Of future joy, and fond exhaustless love.
[*Exit* PUBLIUS.
Bar. (*alone.*) And shall I see him then, see my Hamilcar,
Pride of my soul, and lord of all my wishes?
The only man in all our burning Afric
Who ever taught my bosom how to love!
Down, foolish heart! be calm, my busy thoughts!
If at his name I feel these strange emotions,
How shall I see, how meet my conqueror?
O let not those presume to judge of joy
Who ne'er have felt the pangs which absence gives.
Such tender transport those alone can prove,
Who long, like me, have known disastrous love;
The tears that fell, the sighs that once were paid,
Like grateful incense on his altar laid;
The lambent flame rekindle, not destroy,
And woes remember'd heighten present joy.
[*Exit.*

ACT II.

Scene—*The inside of the Temple of Bellona—Seats for the Senators and Ambassadors—Lictors guarding the entrance.*

Manlius, Publius, *and Senators.*

Man. Let Regulus be sent for to our presence;
And with him the ambassador of Carthage.
Is it then true the foe would treat of peace?
Pub. They wish at least our captives were exchang'd,
And send my father to declare their wish:
If he obtain it, well: if not, then Regulus
Returns to meet the vengeance of the foe,
And pay for your refusal with his blood:
He ratified this treaty with his oath,
And, ere he quitted Carthage, heard, unmov'd,
The dreadful preparations for his death, [men!
Should he return. O Romans! O my country-
Can you resign your hero to your foe?
Say, can you give up Regulus to Carthage?
Man. Peace, Publius, peace, for see, thy father comes.

Enter Hamilcar *and* Regulus.

Ham. Why dost thou stop? dost thou forget this temple?
I thought these walls had been well known to Regulus?
Reg. Hamilcar! I was thinking what I was
When last I saw them, and what now I am
Ham (*to the consul*) Carthage, by me, to Rome this greeting sends;
That, wearied out, at length, with bloody war,
If Rome inclines to peace, she offers it.
Man. We will at leisure answer thee. Be seated.
Come, Regulus, resume thine ancient place
Reg. (*pointing to the senators*) Who then are these?
Man. The senators of Rome.
Reg. And who art thou?
Man. What mean'st thou? I'm her consul;
Hast thou so soon forgotten Manlius? [Rome,
Reg. And shall a *slave* then have a place in
Among her consuls and her senators?
Man. Yes!—For her *heroes* Rome forgets
Softens their harsh austerity for thee, [her *laws;*
To whom she owes her conquest and her triumphs. [bers.
Reg. Rome may forget, but Regulus remem-
Man. Was ever man so obstinately good? (*Aside.*)
Pub. (*rising*) Fathers, your pardon. I can sit no longer. (*To the senators*)
Reg. Publius, what dost thou mean?
Pub. To do my duty;
Where Regulus must stand, shall Publius sit?
Reg. Alas! O Rome, how are thy manners chang'd!
When last I left thee, ere I sail'd for Afric,
It was a crime to think of private duties
When public cares requir'd attention.—Sit,
(*To Pub.*) And learn to occupy thy place with honour.
Pub. Forgive me, sir, if I refuse obedience;
My heart o'erflows with duty to my father.

Reg. Know, Publius, that thy duty's at an
Thy father died when he became a slave. [end;
Man. Now urge thy suit, Hamilcar, we attend. [senger;
Ham. Afric hath chosen Regulus her mes-
In him, both Carthage and Hamilcar speak.
Man. (*to Reg.*) We are prepar'd to hear thee.
Ham. (*to Reg.*) Ere thou speak'st
Maturely weigh what thou hast sworn to do,
Should Rome refuse to treat with us of peace.
Reg. What I have sworn I will fulfil, Ham-
Be satisfied. [ilcar
Pub. Ye guardian gods of Rome,
With your own eloquence inspire him now!
Reg. Carthage by me this embassy has sent;
If Rome will leave her undisturb'd possession
Of all she now enjoys, she offers *peace;*
But if you rather wish protracted war,
Her next proposal is, *exchange of captives;*—
If you demand advice of *Regulus,*
Reject them both.—
Ham. What dost thou mean?
Pub. My father!
Man. Exalted fortitude! I'm lost in wonder.
(*Aside*) [breath,
Reg. Romans! I will not idly spend my
To show the dire effects of such a peace;
The foes, who beg it, show their dread of war.
Man. But the exchange of prisoners thou proposest? [nic fraud.
Reg That artful scheme conceals some Pu-
Ham Roman, beware! hast thou so soon forgotten?
Reg. I will fulfil the treaty I have sworn to.
Pub. All will be ruined
Reg. Conscript fathers! hear me.— [ills,
Though this exchange teems with a thousand
Yet 'tis th' example I would deprecate.
This treaty fix'd, Rome's honour is no more;
Should her degenerate sons be promis'd life,
Dishonest life, and worthless liberty,
Her glory, valour, military pride,
Her fame, her fortitude, her all were lost.
What honest captive of them all would wish
With shame to enter her imperial gates,
The flagrant scourge of slavery on his back?
None, none, my friends, would wish a fate so vile,
But those base cowards who resign'd their arms,
Unstain'd with hostile blood, and poorly sued,
Through ignominious fear of death, for bondage;
The scorn, the laughter, of th' insulting foe.
O shame! shame! shame! eternal infamy!
Man. However hurtful this exchange may be,
The liberty, the life of Regulus,
More than compensates for it.
Reg. Thou art mistaken.—
This Regulus is a mere mortal man,
Yielding apace to all th' infirmities
Of weak, decaying nature —I am old,
Nor can my future, feeble services,
Assist my country much; but mark me well;
The young fierce heroes you'd restore to Carthage,
In lieu of this old man, are her chief bulwarks.
Fathers! in vig'rous youth this well-strung arm
Fought for my country, fought and conquer'd for her:

That was the time to prize its service high.
Now, weak and nerveless, let the foe possess it,
For it can harm them in the field no more.
Let Carthage have the poor, degrading triumph,
To close these failing eyes; but, O, my countrymen!
Check their vain hopes, and show aspiring Afric
That heroes are the common growth of Rome.

Man. Unequall'd fortitude.

Pub. O fatal virtue!

Ham. What do I hear? this constancy confounds me.

Man. (*to the senators*) Let honour be the spring of all our actions,
Not interest, fathers. Let no selfish views
Preach safety at the price of truth and justice.

Reg. If Rome would thank me, I will teach her how.
—Know, fathers, that these savage Africans
Thought me so base, so very low of soul,
That the poor, wretched privilege, of breathing,
Would force me to betray my country to them.
Have these barbarians any tortures left,
To match the cruelty of such a thought?
Revenge me, fathers! and I'm still a Roman.
Arm, arm yourselves, prepare your citizens,
Snatch your imprison'd eagles from their fanes,
Fly to the shores of Carthage, force her gates,
Die every Roman sword in Punic blood—
And do such deeds—that when I shall return
(As I have *sworn*, and am resolved to do),
I may behold with joy, reflected back,
The terrors of your rage in the dire visages
Of my astonish'd executioners.

Ham. Surprise has chill'd my blood! I'm lost in wonder!

Pub. Does no one answer? must my father perish!

Man. Romans, we must defer th' important question.
Maturest counsels must determine on it.
Rest we awhile:—Nature requires some pause
From high-rais'd admiration. Thou, Hamilcar,
Shalt shortly know our final resolution
Meantime, we go to supplicate the gods.

Reg. Have you a doubt remaining? Manlius, speak.

Man. Yes, Regulus, I think the danger less
To lose th' advantage thy advice suggests,
Than would accrue to Rome in losing thee,
Whose wisdom might direct, whose valour guard her.
Athirst for glory thou wouldst rush on death,
And for thy country's sake wouldst greatly perish.
Too vast a sacrifice thy zeal requires,
For Rome must bleed when Regulus expires.

Exeunt consul and senators.

Manent REGULUS, PUBLIUS, HAMILCAR; *to them enter* ATTILIA *and* LICINIUS.

Ham. Does Regulus fulfil his promise thus?

Reg. I've promis'd to return, and I will do it.

Att My father! think a moment.

Lic. Ah! my friend!

Lic. and *Att.* O, by this hand, we beg—

Reg. Away! no more.
Thanks to Rome's guardian gods, I'm yet a slave,
And will be still a slave, to make Rome free!

Att. Was the exchange refused? Oh! ease my fears.

Reg. Publius! conduct Hamilcar and myself
To the abode thou hast for each provided.

Att. A foreign residence? a strange abode?
And will my father spurn his household gods?

Pub. My sire a stranger?—Will he taste no more
The smiling blessings of his cheerful home?

Reg. Dost thou not know the laws of Rome forbid
A foe's ambassador within her gates?

Pub. This rigid law does not extend to thee.

Reg. Yes; did it not alike extend to all,
'Twere tyranny.—The law rights every man,
But favours none.

Att. Then, O my father,
Allow thy daughter to partake thy fate!

Reg Attilia! no. The present exigence
Demands far other thoughts, than the soft cares,
The fond effusions, the delightful weakness,
The dear affections 'twixt the child and parent.

Att. How is my father chang'd from what I've known him!

Reg. The fate of Regulus is chang'd, not Regulus,
I am the same; in laurels or in chains.
'Tis the same principle; the same fix'd soul,
Unmov'd itself, though circumstances change.
The native vigour of the free-born mind
Still struggles with, still conquers, adverse fortune;
Soars above chains, invincible though vanquish'd.

[*Exeunt* REGULUS *and* PUBLIUS.

ATTILIA, HAMILCAR, *going, enter* BARCE.

Bar. Ah! my Hamilcar.

Ham Ah! my long-lost BARCE.
Again I lose thee; Regulus rejects
Th' exchange of prisoners Africa proposes.
My heart's too full. Oh, I have much to say!

Bar. Yet you unkindly leave me, and say nothing.

Ham Ah! didst thou love as thy Hamilcar loves,
Words were superfluous; in my eyes, my Barce,
Thou'dst read the tender eloquence of love,
Th' uncounterfeited language of my heart.
A single look betrays the soul's soft feelings,
And shows imperfect speech of little worth.

[*Exit* HAMILCAR.

Att. My father then conspires his own destruction.
Is it not so?

Bar. Indeed, I fear it much;
But as the senate has not yet resolv'd,
There is some room for hope; lose not a moment;
And, ere the conscript fathers are assembled,
Try all the powers of winning eloquence,
Each gentle art of feminine persuasion,
The love of kindred, and the faith of friends,
To bend the rigid Romans to thy purpose.

Att. Yes, Barce, I will go; I will exert
My little pow'r, though hopeless of success.
Undone Attilia! fall'n from hope's gay heights
Down the dread precipice of deep despair.
So some tir'd mariner the coast espies,
And his lov'd home explores with straining eyes;
Prepares with joy to quit the treacherous deep,
Hush'd every wave, and every wind asleep;
But, ere he lands upon the well-known shore,
Wild storms arise, and furious billows roar,
Tear the fond wretch from all his hopes away,
And drive his shatter'd bark again to sea.

ACT III.

SCENE—*A Portico of a Palace without the gates of Rome.—The abode of the Carthaginian ambassador.*

Enter REGULUS *and* PUBLIUS *meeting.*

Reg. Ah! Publius here at such a time as this? [senate
Know'st thou the important question that the
This very hour debate?—Thy country's glory,
Thy father's honour, and the public good?
Dost thou know this, and fondly linger here?
Pub. They're not yet met, my father.
Reg. Haste—away—
Support my counsel in th' assembled senate,
Confirm their wav'ring virtue by thy courage,
And Regulus shall glory in his boy. [task.
Pub. Ah! spare thy son the most ungrateful
What!—supplicate the ruin of my father?
Reg. The good of Rome can never hurt her sons.
Pub. In pity to thy children, spare thyself.
Reg. Dost thou then think that mine's a frantic bravery?
That Regulus would rashly seek his fate?
Publius! how little dost thou know thy sire!
Misjudging youth! learn, that like *other* men,
I shun the *evil*, and I seek the *good*;
But *that* I find in *guilt*, and *this* in *virtue*.
Were it not guilt, guilt of the blackest die,
Even to *think* of freedom at th' expense
Of my dear bleeding country? to me, therefore,
Freedom and life would be the heaviest evils;
But to preserve that country, to restore her,
To heal her wounds, though at the price of *life*,
Or, what is dearer far, the price of liberty,
Is *virtue*—therefore, slavery and death
Are Regulus's good—his wish—his choice.
Pub Yet sure our country——
Reg Is a *whole*, my Publius,
Of which we all are *parts*, nor should a citizen
Regard *his* interests as distinct from *hers*;
No hopes or fears should touch his patriot soul,
But what affect *her* honour or *her* shame.
E'en when in hostile fields he *bleeds* to save her,
'Tis not *his* blood he loses, 'tis his *country's*;
He only pays her back a debt he owes.
To *her* he's bound for birth and education:
Her *laws* secure him from *domestic* feuds,
And from the *foreign* foe her *arms* protect him.
She lends him honours, dignity, and rank,
His wrongs revenges, and his merit pays;
And, like a tender and indulgent mother,
Loads him with comforts, and would make his state
As blest as nature and the gods design'd it.
Such gifts, my son, have their alloy of *pain*,
And let th' unworthy wretch, who will not bear
His portion of the *public burden*, lose
Th' *advantages* it yields;—let him retire
From the dear blessings of a social life,
And from the sacred laws which guard those blessings;
Renounce the civiliz'd abodes of man,
With kindred brutes one common shelter seek
In horrid wilds, and dens, and dreary caves,
And with their shaggy tenants share the spoil;
Or, if the savage hunters miss their prey,
From scatter'd acorns pick a scanty meal,—
Far from the sweet civilities of life; [dom:
There let him live, and vaunt his wretched free-
While we, obedient to the laws that guard us,
Guard *them*, and live or die as they decree.
Pub With reverence and astonishment I hear thee!
Thy words, my father, have convinc'd my reason,
But cannot touch my heart;—nature denies
Obedience so repugnant. I'm a son.
Reg. A poor excuse, unworthy of a Roman!
Brutus, Virginius, Manlius—they were fathers
Pub. 'Tis true, they were; but this heroic
This glorious elevation of the soul. [greatness,
Has been confin'd to fathers,—Rome, till now,
Boasts not a son of such unnatural virtue,
Who, spurning all the powerful ties of blood,
Has labour'd to procure his father's death.
Reg Then be the first to give the great example—
Go, hasten, be thyself that son, my Publius.
Pub. My father, ah!
Reg. Publius, no more; begone—
Attend the senate—let me know my fate;
'Twill be more glorious if announc'd by thee.
Pub Too much, too much, thy rigid virtue claims
From thy unhappy son O nature, nature!
Reg. Publius! am I a stranger, or thy father?
In either case an obvious duty waits thee;
If thou regard'st me as an alien here,
Learn to prefer to mine the good of Rome;
If as a father—reverence my commands. [soul,
Pub. Ah! couldst thou look into my inmost
And see how warm it burns with love and duty,
Thou wouldst abate the rigour of thy words.
Reg Could I explore the secrets of thy breast,
The virtue I would wish should flourish there
Were fortitude, not weak, complaining love.
Pub. If thou requir'st my *blood*, I'll shed it all;
But when thou dost enjoin the harsher task
That I should labour to procure thy death,
Forgive thy son—he has not so much virtue
[*Exit* PUBLIUS.
Reg. Th' important hour draws on, and now my soul
Loses her wonted calmness, lest the senate
Should doubt what answer to return to Car-
O ye protecting deities of Rome! [thage.
Ye guardian gods! look down propitious on her,
Inspire her senate with your sacred wisdom,
And call up all that's Roman in their souls!

Enter MANLIUS (*speaking*).

See that the lictors wait, and guard the en-
Take care that none intrude. [trance—
Reg. Ah! Manlius here?
What can this mean?
Man. Where, where is Regulus?
The great, the godlike, the invincible?
Oh, let me strain the hero to my breast.—
Reg. (*avoiding him.*) Manlius, stand off, remember I'm a slave?
And thou Rome's consul.
Man I am something more:
I am a man enamour'd of thy virtues;
Thy fortitude and courage have subdued me.
I *was* thy *rival*—I am *now* thy *friend*;

Allow me that distinction, dearer far
Than all the honours Rome can give without it.

Reg. This is the temper still of noble minds,
And these the blessings of an humble fortune.
Had I not been a *slave*, I ne'er had gain'd
The treasure of thy friendship.

Man. I confess,
Thy grandeur cast a veil before my eyes,
Which the reverse of fortune has remov'd
Oft have I seen thee on the day of triumph,
A conqueror of nations, enter Rome;
Now, thou hast conquer'd *fortune* and *thyself*.
Thy laurels oft have mov'd my soul to envy,
Thy chains awaken my respect, my reverence;
Then Regulus appear'd a *hero* to me,
He rises now a god.

Reg. Manlius, enough.
Cease thy applause; 'tis dang'rous; praise like thine
Might tempt the most severe and cautious virtue.
Bless'd be the gods, who gild my latter days
With the bright glory of the consul's friendship!

Man. Forbid it, Jove! saidst thou thy *latter* days?
May gracious heav'n to a far distant hour
Protract thy valued life Be it *my* care
To crown the hopes of thy admiring country,
By giving back her long-lost hero to her
I will exert my power to bring about
Th' exchange of captives Africa proposes.

Reg Manlius, and is it thus, is this the way
Thou dost begin to give me proofs of friendship?
Ah! if thy love be so destructive to me,
What would thy hatred be? Mistaken consul!
Shall I then lose the profit of my wrongs?
Be thus *defrauded* of the benefit
I vainly hoped from all my years of *bondage*?
I did not come to show my chains to Rome,
To move my country to a weak compassion;
I came to save her *honour*, to preserve her
From tarnishing her glory; came to snatch her
From offers so destructive to her fame
O Manlius! either give me proofs more worthy
A Roman's friendship, or renew thy hate

Man. Dost thou not know, that, this exchange [refus'd,
Inevitable death must be thy fate?

Reg. And has the name of *death* such terror in it,
To strike with dread the mighty soul of Manlius?
'Tis not *to-day* I learn that I am mortal.
The foe can only take from Regulus
What wearied nature would have shortly yield- [ed;
It will be now a voluntary gift,
'Twould then become a tribute seiz'd, not offer'd.
Yes, Manlius, tell the world that as I lived
For Rome alone, when I could live no longer,
'Twas my last care how, dying, to assist,
To save that country I had lived to serve.

Man. O unexampled worth! O godlike Regulus!
Thrice happy Rome! unparalleled in heroes!
Hast thou then sworn, thou awfully good man!
Never to bless the consul with thy friendship?

Reg. If thou wilt love me, love me like a *Roman*. [ship.
These are the terms on which I take thy friend-
We both must make a sacrifice to Rome,
I of my life, and thou of *Regulus*:
One must resign his being, one his friend.
It is but just, that what procures our country
Such real blessings, such substantial good,
Should cost thee something—I shall lose but little.
Go then, my friend! but promise, ere thou goest,
With all the consular authority,
Thou wilt support my counsel in the senate.
If thou art willing to accept these terms, [ship.
With transport I embrace thy proffer'd friend-

Man. (*after a pause*.) Yes, I do promise.

Reg. Bounteous gods, I thank you!
Ye never gave, in all your round of blessing,
A gift so greatly welcome to my soul,
As Manlius' friendship on the terms of honour!

Man. Immortal Powers! why am not I a slave?
By heav'n! I almost envy thee thy bonds.

Reg My friend! there's not a moment to be lost;
Ere this, perhaps, the senate is assembled.
To thee, and to thy virtues, I commit
The dignity of Rome—my peace and honour.

Man. Illustrious man, farewell!

Reg Farewell, my friend!

Man The sacred flame thou hast kindled in my soul
Glows in each vein, trembles in every nerve,
And raises me to something more than man.
My blood is fired with virtue, and with Rome,
And every pulse beats an alarm to glory.
Who would not spurn a sceptre when compar'd
With chains like thine? Thou man of every virtue,
O farewell! may all the gods protect and bless thee. [*Exit* MANLIUS.

Enter LICINIUS.

Reg. Now I begin to live: propitious Heaven
Inclines to favour me.—Licinius here?

Lic. With joy, my honour'd friend, I seek thy presence.

Reg And why with joy?

Lic. Because my heart once more
Beats high with flattering hope. In thy great [cause
I have been labouring.

Reg Say'st thou in *my* cause?

Lic. In thine and Rome's Does it excite thy wonder?
Couldst thou then think so poorly of Licinius,
That base ingratitude could find a place
Within his bosom?—Can I then forget
Thy thousand acts of friendship to my youth?
Forget them too at that important moment
When most I might assist thee?—Regulus,
Thou wast my leader, general, father—all.
Didst thou not teach me early how to tread
The path of glory; point the way thyself,
And bid me follow thee?

Reg. But say, Licinius,
What hast thou done to serve me?

Lic I have defended
Thy liberty and life!

Reg. Ah! speak—explain.—

Lic. Just as the fathers were about to meet,
I hasten'd to the temple—at the entrance
Their passage I retarded, by the force
Of strong entreaty; then address'd myself
So well to each, that I from each obtain'd

A declaration, that his utmost power
Should be exerted for thy life and freedom.

Reg. Great gods! what do I hear? Licinius too!

Lic. Not he alone; no, 'twere indeed unjust
To rob the fair Attilia of her claim
To filial merit —What I could, I did.
But *she*—thy charming daughter—heav'n and earth,
What did she not, to save her father?

Reg. Who?

Lic. Attilia, thy belov'd—thy age's darling!
Was ever father bless'd with such a child!
Gods! how her looks took captive all who saw her!
How did her soothing eloquence subdue
The stoutest hearts of Rome! How did she rouse
Contending passions in the breasts of all!
How sweetly temper dignity with grief!
With what a soft, inimitable grace,
She prais'd, reproach'd, entreated, flatter'd, sooth'd

Reg. What said the senators?

Lic. What could they say?
Who could resist the lovely conqueror?
See where she comes—Hope dances in her eyes,
And lights up all her beauties into smiles.

Enter Attilia.

Att. Once more, my dearest father—

Reg. Ah, presume not
To call me by that name For know, Attilia,
I number *thee* among the foes of Regulus

Att. What do I hear? thy foe? my father's foe?

Reg. His worst of foes—the murd'rer of his glory

Att. Ah! is it then a proof of enmity
To wish thee all the good that gods can give thee,
To yield my life, if needful, for thy service?

Reg Thou rash, imprudent girl! thou little know'st
The dignity and weight of public cares.
Who made a weak and inexperienc'd *woman*
The arbiter of Regulus's fate?

Lic. For pity's sake, my Lord!

Reg Peace, peace, young man!
Her silence better than thy language pleads
That bears at least the semblance of repentance
Immortal powers!—A daughter and a Roman!

Att. Because I *am* a daughter, I presum'd—

Lic. Because I *am* a Roman, I aspired
T' oppose th' inhuman rigour of thy fate.

Reg. No more, Licinius. How can he be call'd
A Roman, who would live with infamy?
Or how can she be Regulus's daughter,
Whose coward mind wants fortitude and honour?
Unhappy children! now you make me *feel*
The burden of my chains: your feeble souls
Have made me know I am indeed a slave.

[*Exit* Regulus.

Att Tell me, Licinius, and oh! tell me truly,
If thou believ'st in all the round of time
There ever breath'd a maid so truly wretched?
To weep, to mourn, a father's cruel fate—
To love him with soul-rending tenderness—
To know no peace by day, or rest by night—
To bear a bleeding heart in this poor bosom,
Which aches and trembles but to think he suffers:
This is my crime—in any other child
'Twould be a merit.

Lic. Oh! my best Attilia!
Do not repent thee of the pious deed:
It was a virtuous error. *That* in *us*
Is a just duty, which the godlike soul
Of Regulus would think a shameful weakness.
If the contempt of life in him be virtue,
It were in us a crime to let him perish.
Perhaps at last he may consent to live;
He then will thank us for our cares to save him:
Let not his anger fright thee. Though our love
Offend him now, yet, when his mighty soul
Is reconcil'd to life, he will not chide us.
The sick man loathes, and with reluctance takes
The remedy by which his health's restor'd.

Att. Licinius! his reproaches wound my soul.
I cannot live, and bear his indignation.

Lic. Would my Attilia rather lose her father
Than, by offending him, preserve his life?

Att. Ah! no. If he but live, I am contented.

Lic. Yes, he shall live, and we again be bless'd:
Then dry thy tears, and let those lovely orbs
Beam with their wonted lustre on Licinius,
Who lives but in the sunshine of thy smiles.

[*Exit* Licinius.

Att (*alone.*) Oh Fortune, Fortune, thou capricious goddess!
Thy frowns and favours have alike no bounds;
Unjust or prodigal, in each extreme.
When thou wouldst humble human vanity,
By singling out a wretch to bear thy wrath,
Thou crushest him with anguish to excess;
If thou wouldst *bless*, thou mak'st the happiness
Too poignant for his giddy sense to bear.—
Immortal gods, who rule the fates of men,
Preserve my father! bless him, bless him, heav'n!
If your avenging thunderbolts *must* fall,
Strike *here*—this bosom will invite the blow,
And *thank* you for it: but in mercy spare,
Oh! spare *his* sacred, venerable head;
Respect in *him* an image of yourselves;
And leave a world, who wants it, an example
Of courage, wisdom, constancy, and truth.
Yet if, Eternal Powers who rule this ball!
You have decreed that Regulus must fall;
Teach me to yield to your divine command,
And meekly bow to your correcting hand;
Contented to resign, or pleas'd receive,
What reason may withhold, or mercy give.

[*Exit* Attilia.

ACT IV.

Scene—*Gallery in the Ambassador's Palace.*

Reg. (*alone.*) Be calm my soul! what strange emotions shake thee!
Emotions thou hast never felt till now.
Thou hast defied the dangers of the deep,
Th' impetuous hurricane, the thunder's roar,
And all the terrors of the various war;
Yet, now thou tremblest, fearful and dismay'd,
With anxious expectation of thy fate.—
Yes, thou hast amplest reason for thy fears;
For till this hour, so pregnant with events,
Thy fame and glory never were at stake.
Soft—let me think—what is this thing called *glory?*
'Tis the soul's tyrant, that should be dethron'd,
And learn subjection like her other passions

Ah no! 'tis false: this is the coward's plea;
The lazy language of refining vice.
That man was born in vain, whose wish to serve
Is circumscribed within the wretched bounds
Of *self*—a narrow, miserable sphere!
Glory exalts, enlarges, dignifies,
Absorbs the *selfish* in the *social* claims,
And renders man a blessing to mankind.—
It is this principle, this spark of deity,
Rescues debased humanity from guilt,
And elevates it by her strong excitements.—
It takes off sensibility from pain, [death;
From peril, fear; plucks out the sting from
Changes ferocious into gentle manners;
And teaches men to imitate the gods.
It shows,—but see, alas! where Publius comes
Ah! he advances with a downcast eye,
And step irresolute.—

Enter PUBLIUS.

Reg. My Publius, welcome!
What tidings dost thou bring? What says the senate?
Is yet my fate determin'd? quickly tell me —
Pub. I cannot speak, and yet, alas! I must.
Reg. Tell me the whole.—
Pub. Would I were rather dumb?
Reg. Publius, no more delay:—I charge thee speak. [part.
Pub. The senate has decreed you shall de-
Reg. Blest spirit of Rome! thou hast at last prevail'd—
I thank the gods, I have not lived in vain!
Where is Hamilcar?—find him—let us go,
For Regulus has naught to do in Rome;
I have accomplish'd her important work,
And must depart.
Pub. Ah, my unhappy father!
Reg. *Unhappy*, Publius! didst thou say *unhappy*?
Does he, does that blest man deserve this name,
Who to his latest breath can serve his country?
Pub. Like thee, my father, I adore my country,
Yet weep with anguish o'er thy cruel chains.
Reg. Dost thou not know that *life's* a slavery?
The body is the chain that binds the soul;
A yoke that every mortal must endure.
Wouldst thou lament—lament the general fate,
The chain that nature gives, entail'd on all,
Not these *I* wear.
Pub. Forgive, forgive my sorrows:
I know, alas! too well, those fell barbarians
Intend thee instant death.
Reg. So shall my life
And servitude together have an end.—
Publius, farewell! nay, do not follow me.
Pub. Alas! my father, if thou ever lov'dst
Refuse me not the mournful consolation [me,
To pay the last sad offices of duty
I e'er can show thee.—
Reg. No!—thou canst fulfil
Thy duty to thy father in a way
More grateful to him: I must straight embark.
Be it meanwhile thy pious care to keep
My lov'd Attilia from a sight, I fear,
Would rend her gentle heart. Her tears, my son,
Would dim the glories of thy father's triumph.
Her sinking spirits are subdued by grief,
And, should her sorrows pass the bounds of rea-
Publius, have pity on her tender age; [son,
Compassionate the weakness of her sex;
We must not hope to find in *her* soft soul
The strong exertion of a manly courage.—
Support her fainting spirit, and instruct her,
By thy example, how a Roman ought
To bear misfortune. O, indulge her weakness!
And be to her the father she will lose.
I leave my daughter to thee—I do more—
I leave to thee the conduct of—thyself.
—Ah, Publius! I perceive thy courage fails-
I see the quivering lip, the starting tear;—
That lip, that tear calls down my mounting soul.
Resume thyself—oh! do not blast my hope!
Yes—I'm composed—thou wilt not mock my age—
Thou *art*—thou art a *Roman*—and my *son*. [*Exit.*
Pub. And is he gone?—now be thyself, my soul—
Hard is the conflict, but the triumph glorious.
Yes,—I must conquer these too tender feelings;
The blood that fills these veins demands it of
My father's great example, too, requires it. [me;
Forgive me, *Rome*, and *glory*, if I yielded
To nature's strong attack:—I must subdue it.
Now, Regulus, I *feel* I am thy *son*.

Enter ATTILLA *and* BARCE.

Att. My brother, I'm distracted, wild with fear—
Tell me, O tell me, what I dread to know—
Is it, then, true?—I cannot speak—my father?
Bar May we believe the fatal news?
Pub Yes, Barce.
It is determin'd. Regulus must go.
Att. Immortal powers!—What say'st thou?
Bar. Can it be?
Thou canst not mean it
Att Then you've all betrayed me
Pub. Thy grief avails not.

Enter HAMILCAR *and* LICINIUS.

Bar. Pity us, Hamilcar!
Att. Oh, help, Licinius, help the lost Attilia!
Ham. My Barce! there's no hope.
Lic. Ah! my fair mourner,
All's lost!
Att What, all, Licinius? saidst thou all?
Not one poor glimpse of comfort left behind?
Tell me at least where Regulus is gone:
The daughter shall partake the father's chains,
And share the woes she knew not to prevent. [*Going.*
Pub. What would thy wild despair? Attilia, stay,
Thou must not follow; this excess of grief
Would much offend him.
Att. Dost thou hope to *stop* me?
Pub. I hope thou wilt resume thy better self,
And recollect thy father will not bear—
Att. I only recollect I am a *daughter*,
A poor, defenceless, helpless, wretched daugh-
Away—and let me follow. [ter!
Pub. No, my sister.

Att. Detain me not—Ah! while thou hold'st me here,
He goes, and I shall never see him more.
Bar. My friend, be comforted, he cannot go
Whilst here Hamilcar stays.
Att. O, Barce, Barce!
Who will advise, who comfort, who assist me?
Hamilcar, pity me.—Thou wilt not answer?
Ham. Rage and astonishment divide my soul.
Att. Licinius, wilt thou not relieve my sorrows?
Lic. Yes, at my life's expense, my heart's best treasure,
Wouldst thou instruct me how.
Att. My brother, too—
Ah! look with mercy on thy sister's woes!
Pub. I will at least instruct thee how to *bear* them.
My sister—yield thee to thy adverse fate;
Think of thy father, think of Regulus;
Has he not taught thee how to brave misfortune?
'Tis but by following his illustrious steps
Thou e'er canst merit to be call'd his daughter.
Att. And is it thus thou dost advise thy sister?
Are these, ye gods, the feelings of a son?
Indifference here becomes impiety—
Thy savage heart ne'er felt the dear delights
Of filial tenderness—the thousand joys
That flow from blessing and from being bless'd!
No—didst thou love thy father as *I* love him,
Our kindred souls would be in unison;
And all my sighs be echoed back by thine.
Thou wouldst—alas!—I know not what I say —
Forgive me, Publius,—but, indeed, my brother,
I do not understand this cruel coldness.
Ham Thou mayst not—but I understand it well.
His mighty soul, full as to thee it seems
Of Rome and glory—is enamour'd—caught—
Enraptur'd with the beauties of fair Barce.—
She stays behind, if Regulus *departs*.
Behold the cause of all the well-feign'd virtue
Of this mock patriot—curst dissimulation!
Pub. And canst thou entertain such vile suspicions?
Gods! what an outrage to a son like me.
Ham. Yes, Roman: now I see thee as thou art,
Thy naked soul divested of its veil,
Its specious colouring, its dissembled virtues:
Thou hast plotted with the senate to prevent
Th' exchange of captives All thy subtle arts,
Thy smooth inventions, have been set to work—
The base refinements of your *polish'd* land.
Pub. In truth the doubt is worthy of an African. (*Contemptuously.*)
Ham. I know—
Pub. Peace, Carthaginian. peace, and hear me,
Didst thou not know, that on the very man
Thou hast insulted, Barce's fate depends?
Ham. Too well I know, the cruel chance of war
Gave her, a blooming captive, to thy mother;
Who, dying, left the beauteous prize to thee.
Pub. Now, see the use a *Roman* makes of power.
Heav'n is my witness how I lov'd the maid!
O she was dearer to my soul than light!
Dear as the vital stream that feeds my heart!
But know, my *honour's* dearer than my love.
I do not even hope *thou* wilt believe me;
Thy brutal soul, as savage as thy clime,
Can never taste those elegant delights,
Those pure refinements, love and glory yield.
'Tis not to thee I stoop for vindication,
Alike to me thy friendship or thy hate;
But to remove from others a pretence
For branding Publius with the name of villain;
That *they* may see no sentiment but honour
Informs this bosom.—Barce, thou art *free*.
Thou hast my leave with him to quit this shore.
Now learn, barbarian, how a *Roman* loves. [*Exit.*
Bar. He cannot mean it!
Ham. Oh, exalted virtue!
Which challenges esteem, though from a foe.
(*Looking after Publius*)
Att. Ah! cruel Publius, wilt thou leave me thus?
Thus leave thy sister?
Bar. Didst thou hear, Hamilcar?
Oh! didst thou hear the godlike youth resign me?
(*Hamilcar and Licinius seem lost in thought.*)
Ham. Farewell, I will return
Lic. Farewell, my love! (*to Attilia.*)
Bar. Hamilcar, where—
Att. Alas! where art thou going?
(*to Licinius.*
Lic. If possible, to save the life of Regulus.
Att. But by what means?—Ah! how canst thou effect it?
Lic. Since the disease so desperate is become,
We must apply a desperate remedy.
Ham. (*after a long pause.*) Yes, I will mortify this generous foe;
I'll be reveng'd upon this stubborn Roman;
Not by defiance bold, or feats of arms,
But by a means more sure to work its end;
By emulating his exalted worth,
And showing him a virtue like his own;
Such a refin'd revenge as noble minds
Alone can practise, and alone can feel.
Att. If thou wilt go, Licinius, let Attilia
At least go with thee.
Lic. No, my gentle love,
Too much I prize thy safety and thy peace.
Let me entreat thee, stay with Barce here
'Till our return.
Att. Then, ere ye go, in pity
Explain the latent purpose of your souls.
Lic. Soon shalt thou know it all—Farewell! farewell!
Let us keep Regulus in *Rome* or *die*.
(*to Hamilcar as he goes out.*)
Ham. Yes.—These smooth, polish'd Romans, shall confess
The soil of *Afric* too produces heroes.
What, though our pride perhaps be less than theirs,
Our virtue may be equal: they shall own
The path of honour's not unknown to Carthage,
Nor, as they arrogantly think, confin'd
To their proud capitol:—Yes, they shall learn
The gods look down on other climes than theirs.
[*Exit.*
Att. What! gone, *both* gone? What can I think or do?
Licinius leaves me, led by love and virtue,
To rouse the citizens to war and tumult,
Which may be fatal to himself and Rome,
And yet, alas! not serve my dearest father.
Protecting deities! preserve them both!

Bar. Nor is thy Barce more at ease, my friend;
I dread the fierceness of Hamilcar's courage;
Rous'd by the grandeur of thy brother's deed,
And stung by his reproaches, his great soul
Will scorn to be outdone by him in glory.
Yet, let us rise to courage and to life,
Forget the weakness of our helpless sex,
And mount above these coward woman's fears
Hope dawns upon my mind—my prospect clears,
And every cloud now brightens into day.

Att. How different are our souls! Thy sanguine temper,
Flush'd with the native vigour of thy soil,
Supports thy spirits; while the sad Attilia,
Sinking with more than all her sex's fears,
Sees not a beam of hope; or, if she sees it,
'Tis not the bright, warm splendour of the sun;
It is a sickly and uncertain glimmer
Of instantaneous lightning, passing by.
It shows, but not diminishes the danger,
And leaves my poor benighted soul as dark
As it had never shone

Bar. Come, let us go.
Yes, joys unlook'd for now shall gild thy days,
And brighter suns reflect propitious rays.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE—*A Hall looking towards the Garden.*

Enter REGULUS, *speaking to one of* HAMILCAR'S *attendants.*

Where's your ambassador? where is Hamilcar?
Ere this he doubtless knows the senate's will.
Go seek him out—tell him we must depart—
Rome has no *hope* for *him*, or *wish* for *me*.
Longer delay were criminal in *both*.

Enter MANLIUS.

Reg. He comes. The consul comes! my noble friend!
O let me strain thee to this grateful heart,
And thank thee for the vast, vast debt, I owe thee!
But for *thy* friendship I had been a wretch—
Had been compell'd to shameful *liberty*.
To thee I owe the glory of these chains,
My faith inviolate, my fame preserv'd,
My honour, virtue, glory, bondage,—all!

Man. But we shall lose thee, so it is decreed—
Thou must depart!

Reg. Because I must depart
You will not lose me; I were lost indeed
Did I remain in Rome.

Man. Ah! Regulus,
Why, why so late do I begin to love thee?
Alas! why have the adverse fates decreed,
I ne'er must give thee other proofs of friendship,
Than those, so fatal, and so full of wo?

Reg. Thou hast perform'd the duties of a friend;
Of a just, faithful, true, and noble friend:
Yet, generous as thou art, if thou constrain me
To sink beneath a weight of obligation,
I could—yes, Manlius—I could ask still more.

Man. Explain thyself.

Reg. I think I have fulfill'd
The various duties of a citizen;
Nor have I aught beside to do for Rome.
Now, nothing for the public good remains.
Manlius, I recollect I am a father!
My Publius! my Attilia! ah! my friend,
They are—(forgive the weakness of a parent)
To my fond heart dear as the drops that warm it.
Next to my country, they're my all of life;
And, if a weak old man be not deceiv'd,
They will not shame that country. Yes, my friend,
The love of virtue blazes in their souls.
As yet these tender plants are immature,
And ask the fostering hand of cultivation:
Heav'n in its wisdom would not let their *father*
Accomplish this great work.—To thee, my friend,
The tender parent delegates the trust:
Do not refuse a poor man's legacy;
I do bequeath my orphans to thy love—
If thou wilt kindly take them to thy bosom,
Their loss will be repaid with usury.
O, let the father owe his glory to thee,
The children their protection!

Man. Regulus,
With grateful joy my heart accepts the trust,
Oh! I will shield with jealous tenderness,
The precious blossoms from a blasting world.
In me thy children shall possess a father,
Though not as worthy, yet as fond as thee.
The pride be mine to fill their youthful breasts
With every virtue—'twill not cost me much:
I shall have naught to teach, nor they to learn,
But the great history of their godlike sire

Reg I will not hurt the grandeur of thy virtue,
By paying thee so poor a thing as thanks.
Now all is over, and, I bless the gods,
I've nothing more to do

Enter PUBLIUS *in haste.*

Pub. O Regulus!

Reg. Say what has happen'd?

Pub. Rome is in a tumult—
There's scarce a citizen but runs to arms—
They will not let thee go.

Reg. Is't possible?
Can Rome so far forget her dignity
As to desire this infamous exchange?
I blush to think it!

Pub. Ah! not so, my father.
Rome cares not for the peace, nor for th' exchange;
She only wills that Regulus shall stay.

Reg. How, stay? my oath—my faith—my honour! ah!
Do they forget?

Pub. No: Every man exclaims,
That neither faith nor honour should be kept
With Carthaginian perfidy and fraud.

Reg Gods! gods! on what vile principles they reason!
Can guilt in Carthage palliate guilt in Rome,
Or vice in one absolve it in another?
Ah! who hereafter shall be criminal,
If precedents are used to justify
The blackest crimes?

Pub. Th' infatuated people
Have called the augurs to the sacred fane,
There to determine this momentous point.

Reg. I have no need of *oracles*, my son;
Honour's the oracle of honest men.
I gave my promise, which I will observe
With most religious strictness. Rome, 'tis true,
Had power to choose the peace, or change of slaves;
But whether Regulus return or not,

Is *his* concern, not the concern of *Rome.*
That was a public, *this* a private care.
Publius! thy father is not what he was;
I am the slave of *Carthage*, nor has Rome
Power to dispose of captives not her own.
Guards! let us to the port.—Farewell, my friend.

Man. Let me entreat thee stay; for shouldst [thou go
To stem this tumult of the populace,
They will by force detain thee: then, alas!
Both Regulus and Rome must break their faith.

Reg. What! must I then remain?

Man. No, Regulus,
I will not check thy great career of glory:
Thou shalt depart; meanwhile, I'll try to calm
This wild, tumultuous uproar of the people.
The consular authority shall still them.

Reg. Thy virtue is my safeguard—but—

Man. Enough.—
I know *thy* honour, and trust thou to *mine.*
I am a *Roman*, and I feel some sparks
Of Regulus's virtue in my breast.
Though fate denies me thy illustrious chains,
I will at least endeavour to *deserve* them.
[*Exit.*

Reg. How is my country alter'd! how, alas,
Is the great spirit of old Rome extinct!
Restraint and *force* must now be put to use,
To *make* her virtuous. She must be *compell'd*
To faith and honour —Ah! what, Publius here?
And dost thou leave so tamely to my friend
The honour to assist me? Go, my boy,
'Twill make me *more* in love with chains and [death,
To owe them to a *son*

Pub I go, my father—
I will, I will obey thee

Reg. Do not sigh—
One sigh will check the progress of thy glory.

Pub. Yes, I will own the pangs of death itself
Would be less cruel than these agonies.
Yet do not frown austerely on thy son:
His *anguish* is his *virtue:* if to conquer
The feelings of my soul were *easy* to me,
'Twould be no merit Do not then defraud
The sacrifice I make thee of its worth.
[*Exeunt severally.*

MANLIUS, ATTILIA.

Att (*speaking as she enters*) Where is the consul?—where, oh! where is Manlius?
I come to breathe the voice of mourning to him;
I come to crave his mercy, to conjure him
To whisper peace to my afflicted bosom,
And heal the anguish of a wounded spirit.

Man. What would the daughter of my noble friend?

Att. (*kneeling.*) If ever pity's sweet emotions [touch'd thee,—
If ever gentle love assail'd thy breast—
If ever virtuous friendship fir'd thy soul—
By the dear names of husband and of parent—
By all the soft yet powerful ties of nature—
If e'er thy lisping infants charm'd thine ear,
And waken'd all the father in thy soul,—
If e'er thou hop'st to have thy latter days
Bless'd by their love, and sweeten'd by their duty—
Oh! hear a kneeling, weeping, wretched daugh-[ter,
Who begs a father's life—nor hers alone,
But Rome's—his country's father.

Man. Gentle maid!
Oh! spare this soft, subduing eloquence!—
Nay, rise. I shall forget I am a Roman—
Forget the mighty debt I owe my country—
Forget the fame and glory of thy father.
I must conceal this weakness (*turns from her.*)

Att. (*rises eagerly*) Ah! you weep!
Indulge, indulge, my lord, the virtuous softness:
Was ever sight so graceful, so becoming,
As pity's tear upon the hero's cheek?

Man. No more—I must not hear thee. (*go-[ing.*)

Att. How! not hear me! [lord—
You must—you shall—nay, nay, return, my
Oh! fly not from me—look upon my woes,
And imitate the mercy of the gods:
'Tis not their thunder that excites our reverence,
'Tis their mild mercy and forgiving love.
'Twill add a brighter lustre to thy laurels,
When men shall say, and proudly point thee out,
"Behold the consul!—he who sav'd his friend."
Oh! what a tide of joy will overwhelm thee!
Who will not envy thee thy glorious feelings?

Man. Thy father scorns his liberty and life,
Nor will accept of either, at th' expense
Of honour, virtue, glory, faith, and Rome.

Att Think you behold the godlike Regulus;
The prey of unrelenting, savage foes,
Ingenious only in contriving ill.—
Eager to glut their hunger of revenge,
They'll plot such new, such dire, unheard-of tortures—
Such dreadful and such complicated vengeance,
As e'en the Punic annals have not known;
And, as they heap fresh torments on his head,
They'll glory in their genius for destruction.
Ah! Manlius—now methinks I see my father—
My faithful fancy, full of his idea,
Presents him to me—mangled, gash'd, and [torn—
Stretch'd on the rack in writhing agony—
The torturing pincers tear his quivering flesh,
While the dire murderers smile upon his wounds—
His groans their music, and his pangs their sport.
And if they lend some interval of ease,
Some dearbought intermission, meant to make
The following pang more exquisitely felt,
Th' insulting executioners exclaim,
"Now, Roman! feel the vengeance thou hast [scorn'd!"

Man. Repress thy sorrows—

Att. Can the friend of Regulus
Advise his daughter not to mourn his fate?
How cold, alas! is friendship, when compar'd
To ties of blood—to nature's powerful impulse!
Yes—she asserts her empire in my soul,
'Tis nature pleads—she will—she must be heard;
With warm, resistless eloquence, she pleads.
Ah, thou art soften'd!—see—the consul yields—
The feelings triumph—tenderness prevails—
The Roman is subdued—the daughter conquers! (*catching hold of his robe.*)

Man. Ah! hold me not—I must not, cannot [stay,
The softness of thy sorrow is contagious;
I too may feel, when I should only reason.
I dare not hear thee—Regulus and Rome,
The patriot and the friend—all, all forbid it.
(*breaks from her, and exit.*)

Att. Oh feeble grasp!—and is he gone, quite gone?
Hold, hold thy empire, reason, firmly hold it,
Or rather quit at once thy feeble throne,
Since thou but serv'st to show me what I've lost,
To heighten all the horrors that await me;
To summon up a wild, distracted crowd
Of fatal images, to shake my soul,
To scare sweet peace, and banish hope itself.
Farewell! delusive dreams of joy, farewell!
Come, fell despair! thou pale-eyed spectre, come,
For thou shalt be Attilia's inmate now,
And thou shalt grow, and twine about her heart,
And she shall be so much enamour'd of thee,
The pageant pleasure ne'er shall interpose
Her gaudy presence to divide you more.
(*stands in an attitude of silent grief.*)

Enter Licinius.

Lic. At length I've found thee—ah, my charming maid!
How have I sought thee out with anxious fondness!
Alas! she hears me not. My best Attilia!
Ah! grief oppresses every gentle sense.
Still, still she hears not—'tis Licinius speaks,
He comes to sooth the anguish of thy spirit,
And hush thy tender sorrows into peace.

Att. Who's he that dares assume the voice of love,
And comes unbidden to these dreary haunts?
Steals on the sacred treasury of wo,
And breaks the league despair and I have made?

Lic. 'Tis one who comes the messenger of Heav'n,
To talk of peace, of comfort, and of joy.

Att. Didst thou not mock me with the sound of joy?
Thou little know'st the anguish of my soul,
If thou believ'st I ever can again,
So long the wretched sport of angry fortune,
Admit delusive hope to my sad bosom.
No—I abjure the flatterer and her train.
Let those who ne'er have been like me deceiv'd,
Embrace the fair, fantastic sycophant—
For I, alas! am wedded to despair,
And will not hear the sound of comfort more.

Lic. Cease, cease, my love, this tender voice of wo,
Though softer than the dying cygnet's plaint:
She ever chants her most melodious strain
When death and sorrow harmonize her note.

Att. Yes, I will listen now with fond delight;
For death and sorrow are my darling themes.
Well!—what hast thou to say of death and sorrow?
Believe me, thou wilt find me apt to listen,
And, if my tongue be slow to answer thee,
Instead of words I'll give thee sighs and tears.

Lic. I come to dry thy tears, not make them flow;
The gods, once more propitious, smile upon us,
Joy shall again await each happy morn,
And ever-new delight shall crown the day!
Yes, Regulus shall live.

Att. Ah, me! what say'st thou?
Alas! I'm but a poor, weak, trembling woman—
I cannot bear these wild extremes of fate—
Then mock me not. I think thou art Licinius,
The generous lover, and the faithful friend!
I think thou wouldst not sport with my afflictions.

Lic. Mock thy afflictions? May eternal Jove,
And every power at whose dread shrine we worship,
Blast all the hopes my fond ideas form,
If I deceive thee! Regulus shall live,
Shall live to give thee to Licinius' arms.
Oh! we will smooth his downward path of life,
And after a long length of virtuous years,
At the last verge of honourable age,
When nature's glimmering lamp goes gently out,
We'll close, together close, his eyes in peace,
Together drop the sweetly-painful tear,
Then copy out his virtues in our lives.

Att. And shall we be so blest? is't possible?
Forgive me, my Licinius, if I doubt thee.
Fate never gave such exquisite delight
As flattering hope hath imaged to thy soul.
But how? Explain this bounty of the gods.

Lic. Thou know'st what influence the name of tribune
Gives its possessor o'er the people's minds:
That power I have exerted, nor in vain;
All are prepar'd to second my designs:
The plot is ripe—there's not a man but swears
To keep thy godlike father here in Rome—
To save his life at hazard of his own.

Att. By what gradation does my joy ascend!
I thought that if my father had been sav'd
By any means, I had been rich in bliss:
But that he lives, and lives preserv'd by thee,
Is such a prodigality of fate,
I cannot bear my joy with moderation:
Heaven should have dealt it with a scantier hand,
And not have shower'd such plenteous blessings on me;
They are too great, too flattering, to be real;
'Tis some delightful vision which enchants
And cheats my senses, weaken'd by misfortune.

Lic. We'll seek thy father, and, meanwhile, my fair,
Compose thy sweet emotions ere thou see'st him.
Pleasure itself is painful in excess;
For joys, like sorrows, in extreme, oppress:
The gods themselves our pious cares approve,
And, to reward our virtue, crown our love.

ACT V.

An Apartment in the Ambassador's palace—Guards and other attendants seen at a distance.

Ham. Where is this wondrous man, this matchless hero,
This arbiter of kingdoms and of kings,
This delegate of Heaven, this Roman god?
I long to show his soaring mind an equal,
And bring it to the standard of humanity.
What pride, what glory will it be, to fix
An obligation on his stubborn soul!
Oh! to constrain a foe to be obliged!
The very thought exalts me e'en to rapture.

Enter Regulus *and Guards.*

Ham. Well, Regulus! At last—

Reg. I know it all;
I know the motive of thy just complaint—
Be not alarm'd at this licentious uproar

Of the mad populace. I will depart—
Fear not; I will not stay in Rome alive.
Ham. What dost thou mean by uproar and alarms?
Hamilcar does not come to vent complaints;
He rather comes to prove, that Afric too
Produces heroes, and that Tiber's banks
May find a rival on the Punic coast.
Reg. Be it so.—'Tis not a time for vain debate:
Collect thy people.—Let us straight depart.
Ham. Lend me thy hearing first.
Reg. O patience, patience!
Ham. It is esteem'd a glory to be grateful?
Reg. The time has been when 'twas a duty only,
But 'tis a duty now so little practis'd,
That to perform it is become a glory.
Ham. If to fulfil it should expose to danger?—
Reg. It rises then to an illustrious virtue.
Ham. Then grant this merit to an African.
Give me a patient hearing.—Thy great son,
As delicate in honour as in love,
Hath nobly given my Barce to my arms;
And yet I know he dotes upon the maid.
I come to emulate the generous deed;
He gave me back my love, and in return
I will restore his father.
Reg. Ah! what say'st thou?
Wilt thou preserve me, then?
Ham. I will.
Reg. But how?
Ham. By leaving thee at liberty to *fly*
Reg. Ah!
Ham. I will dismiss my guards on some pretence,
Meanwhile do thou escape, and lie conceal'd·
I will affect a rage I shall not feel,
Unmoor my ships, and sail for Africa
Reg. Abhorr'd barbarian!
Ham Well, what dost thou say?
Art thou not much surpris'd?
Reg I am indeed.
Ham. Thou couldst not then have hoped it?
Reg. No! I could not.
Ham. And yet I'm not a Roman.
Reg. (*smiling contemptuously*) I perceive it.
Ham. You may retire. (*aloud to the guards*)
Reg. No!—Stay, I charge you, stay.
Ham. And wherefore stay?
Reg. I thank thee for thy offer,
But I shall go with thee.
Ham. 'Tis well, proud man!
Thou dost despise me, then?
Reg. No, but I pity thee.
Ham. Why pity me?
Reg. Because thy poor, dark soul,
Hath never felt the piercing ray of virtue.
Know, African! the scheme thou dost propose
Would injure me, thy country, and thyself.
Ham. Thou dost mistake.
Reg. Who was it gave thee power
To rule the destiny of Regulus?
Am I a slave to Carthage, or to thee?
Ham. What does it signify from whom, proud Roman,
Thou dost receive this benefit?
Reg. A benefit?
O, savage ignorance! is it a benefit
To lie, elope, deceive, and be a villain?
Ham. What! not when life itself, when all's at stake?
Know'st thou my countrymen prepare thee tortures
That shock imagination but to think of?
Thou wilt be mangled, butcher'd, rack'd, impaled.
Goes not thy nature shrink?
Reg (*smiling at his threats.*) Hamilcar! no.
Dost thou not know the Roman genius better?
We live on honour—'tis our food, our life,
The motive and the measure of our deeds!
We look on death as on a common object;
The tongue nor faulters, nor the cheek turns pale,
Nor the calm eye is moved at sight of him:
We court, and we embrace him, undismay'd;
We smile at tortures if they lead to glory,
And only cowardice and guilt appal us.
Ham. Fine sophistry! the valour of the tongue,
The heart disclaims it; leave this pomp of words,
And cease dissembling with a friend like me.
I know that life is dear to all who live,
That death is dreadful,—yes, and must be fear'd,
E'en by the frozen apathists of Rome.
Reg. Did I fear death, when, on Bagrada's banks,
I faced and slew the formidable serpent
That made your boldest Africans recoil,
And shrink with horror, though the monster liv'd
A native inmate of their own parch'd deserts?
Did I fear death before the gates of Adis?—
Ask Bostar, or let Asdrubal confess.
Ham. Or shall I rather of Xantippus ask,
Who dar'd to undeceive deluded Rome,
And prove this vaunter not invincible?
'Tis even said, in Africa I mean,
He made a prisoner of this demi-god.—
Did we not triumph then?
Reg Vain boaster! no.
No Carthaginian conquer'd Regulus;
Xantippus was a Greek—a brave one, too:
Yet what distinction did your Afric make
Between the man who serv'd her and her foe?
I was the object of her open hate:
He, of her secret, dark malignity.
He durst not trust the nation he had sav'd;
He knew, and therefore fear'd you.—Yes, he knew
Where once you were obliged, you ne'er forgave.
Could you forgive at all, you'd rather pardon
The man who hated, than the man who serv'd you.
Xantippus found his ruin ere it reach'd him,
Lurking behind your honours and rewards,
Found it in your feign'd courtesies and fawnings.
When vice intends to strike a master stroke,
Its veil is smiles, its language protestations.
The Spartan's merit threaten'd, but his service
Compell'd his ruin —Both you could not pardon.
Ham Come, come, I know full well—
Reg. Barbarian! peace.
I've heard too much—Go, call thy followers;
Prepare thy ships, and learn to do thy duty.
Ham. Yes!—show thyself intrepid, and insult me;
Call mine the blindness of barbarian friendship.
On Tiber's banks I hear thee, and am calm:
But know, thou scornful Roman! that too soon
In Carthage thou mayst fear and feel my vengeance:
Thy cold, obdurate pride shall there confess,
Though Rome may talk—'tis Africa can punish.
[*Exit.*

Reg. Farewell! I've not a thought to waste on thee.
Where is the consul? why does Publius stay?
Alas! I fear—but see, Attilia comes.

Enter ATTILIA.

Reg. What brings thee here, my child? what eager joy
Transports thee thus?
Att. I cannot speak—my father!
Joy chokes my utterance—Rome, dear, grateful Rome
(Oh! may her cup with blessings overflow),
Gives up our common destiny to thee; [her,
Faithful and constant to th' advice thou gav'st
She will not hear of peace, or change of slaves,
But she insists—reward and bless her, gods!—
That thou shalt here remain.
Reg. What! with the shame—
Att. Oh! no—the sacred senate hath consider'd [faith,
That, when to Carthage thou didst pledge thy
Thou wast a captive, and that, being such,
Thou couldst not bind thyself in covenant.
Reg. He who can die is always free, my child!
Learn farther, he who owns another's strength
Confesses his own weakness. Let them know,
I swore I would return because I chose it,
And will return, because I swore to do it.

Enter PUBLIUS.

Pub Vain is that hope, my father
Reg. Who shall stop me?
Pub. All Rome.—The citizens are up in arms:
In vain would reason stop the growing torrent;
In vain wouldst thou attempt to reach the port,
The way is barr'd by thronging multitudes:
The other streets of Rome are all deserted.
Reg. Where, where is Manlius?
Pub. He is still thy friend;
His single voice opposes a whole people;
He threats this moment, and the next entreats,
But all in vain; none hear him, none obey.
The general fury rises e'en to madness
The axes tremble in the lictors' hands,
Who, pale and spiritless, want power to use them—
And one wild scene of anarchy prevails.
Reg. Farewell! my daughter. Publius, follow me. [*Exit* PUBLIUS.
Att. Ah! where? I tremble—
(*detaining* REGULUS.)
Reg. . To assist my friend—
T' upbraid my hapless country with her crime—
To keep unstain'd the glory of these chains—
To go, or perish.
Att. Oh! have mercy!
Reg. Hold;
I have been patient with thee; have indulg'd
Too much the fond affections of thy soul;
It is enough; thy grief would now offend
Thy father's honour; do not let thy tears
Conspire with Rome to rob me of my triumph.
Att. Alas! it wounds my soul.
Reg. I know it does.
I know 'twill grieve thy gentle heart to lose me;
But think thou mak'st the sacrifice to Rome,
And all is well again.
Att. Alas! my father,
In aught beside—
Reg. What wouldst thou do, my child?
Canst thou direct the destiny of Rome,
And boldly plead amid th' assembled senate?
Canst thou, forgetting all thy sex's softness,
Fiercely engage in hardy deeds of arms?
Canst thou encounter labour, toil, and famine,
Fatigue and hardships, watchings, cold and heat?
Canst thou attempt to serve thy country thus?
Thou canst not:—but thou mayst sustain my
Without these agonizing pangs of grief, [loss
And set a bright example of submission,
Worthy a Roman's daughter.
Att. Yet such fortitude—
Reg. Is a most painful virtue;—but Attilia
Is Regulus's daughter, and must have it.
Att. I will entreat the gods to give it me.
Ah! thou art offended! I have lost thy love.
Reg. Is this concern a mark that thou hast lost it?
I cannot, cannot spurn my weeping child.
Receive this proof of my paternal fondness;—
Thou lov'st Licinius—he too loves my daughter.
I give thee to his wishes; I do more—
I give thee to his virtues.—Yes, Attilia,
The noble youth deserves this dearest pledge
Thy father's friendship ever can bestow.
Att. My lord! my father! wilt thou, canst thou leave me?
The tender father will not quit his child!
Reg. I am, I am thy father! as a proof,
I leave thee my example how to suffer.
My child! I have a heart within this bosom;
That heart has passions—see in what we differ;
Passion—which is thy tyrant—is my slave.
Att Ah! stay, my father Ah!
Reg. Farewell! farewell! [*Exit.*
Att Yes, Regulus! I feel thy spirit here,
Thy mighty spirit, struggling in this breast,
And it shall conquer all these coward feelings,
It shall subdue the woman in my soul;
A Roman virgin should be something more—
Should dare above her sex's narrow limits—
And I will dare—and mis'ry shall assist me—
My father! I will be indeed thy daughter!
The hero shall no more disdain his child;
Attilia shall not be the only branch
That yields dishonour to the parent tree.

Enter BARCE.

Bar. Attilia! is it true that Regulus,
In spite of senate, people, augurs, friends,
And children, will depart?
Att. Yes, it is true.
Bar. Oh! what romantic madness!
Att. You forget—
Barce! the deeds of heroes claim respect.
Bar. Dost thou approve a virtue which must lead
To chains, to tortures, and to certain death?
Att. Barce! those chains, those tortures, and
Will be his triumph. [that death,
Bar. Thou art pleas'd, Attilia;
By heav'n, thou dost exult in his destruction!

Att. Ah! pitying powers. (*weeps.*)
Bar. I do not comprehend thee.
Att. No, Barce, I believe it.—Why, how shouldst thou?
If I mistake not, thou wast born in Carthage;
In a barbarian land, where never child
Was taught to triumph in a father's chains.
Bar. Yet thou dost weep—thy tears at least are honest,
For they refuse to share thy tongue's deceit;
They speak the genuine language of affliction,
And tell the sorrows that oppress thy soul.
Att. Grief, that dissolves in tears, relieves the heart.
When congregated vapours melt in rain,
The sky is calm'd, and all's serene again. [*Exit.*
Bar. Why, what a strange, fantastic land is this!
This love of glory's the disease of Rome;
It makes her mad, it is a wild delirium,
A universal and contagious phrensy;
It preys on all, it spares nor sex nor age:
The consul envies Regulus his chains— [dom—
He, not less mad, contemns his life and free-
The daughter glories in the father's ruin—
And Publius, more distracted than the rest,
Resigns the object that his soul adores,
For this vain phantom, for this empty glory.
This may be virtue; but I thank the gods,
The soul of Barce's not a Roman soul [*Exit*

SCENE—*Within sight of the Tiber—ships ready for the embarcation of Regulus and the Ambassador—Tribune and People stopping up the passage—Consul and Lictors endeavouring to clear it.*

MANLIUS *and* LICINIUS *advance.*

Lic. Rome will not suffer Regulus to go.
Man. I thought the consul and the senators
Had been a part of Rome.
Lic. I grant they are—
But still the people are the greater part.
Man. The greater, not the wiser.
Lic. The less cruel.——
Full of esteem and gratitude to Regulus,
We would preserve his life.
Man. And we his honour.
Lic. His honour!——
Man. Yes. Time presses. Words are vain.
Make way there—clear the passage.
Lic. On your lives,
Stir not a man.
Man. I do command you, go.
Lic. And I forbid it.
Man. Clear the way, my friends.
How dares Licinius thus oppose the consul?
Lic. How dar'st thou, Manlius, thus oppose the tribune?
Man. I'll show thee what I dare, imprudent
Lictors, force through the passage. [boy!
Lic. Romans, guard it.
Man. Gods! is my power resisted then with
Thou dost affront the majesty of Rome. [arms!
Lic. The majesty of Rome is in the people;
Thou dost insult it by opposing them.
People. Let noble Regulus remain in Rome

Man. My friends, let me explain this treacherous scheme.
People. We will not hear thee—Regulus shall
Man. What! none obey me? [stay.
People. Regulus shall stay.
Man. Romans, attend.——
People. Let Regulus remain.

Enter REGULUS, *followed by* PUBLIUS, ATTILIA, HAMILCAR, BARCE, &c.

Reg. Let Regulus remain! What do I hear?
Is't possible the wish should come from you?
Can Romans give, or Regulus accept,
A life of infamy? Is't possible!
Where is the ancient virtue of my country?
Rise, rise, ye mighty spirits of old Rome!
I do invoke you from your silent tombs;
Fabricius, Cocles, and Camillus, rise, [were.
And show your sons what their great fathers
My countrymen, what crime have I committed?
Alas! how has the wretched Regulus
Deserv'd your hatred!
Lic. Hatred? ah! my friend,
It is our love would break these cruel chains.
Reg. If you deprive me of my chains, I'm nothing;
They are my honours, riches, titles,—all! [try;
They'll shame my enemies, and grace my coun-
They'll waft her glory to remotest climes,
Beyond her provinces and conquer'd realms,
Where yet her conq'ring eagles never flew;
Nor shall she blush hereafter if she find
Recorded with her faithful citizens,
The name of Regulus, the captive Regulus.
My countrymen! what, think you, kept in awe
The Volsci, Sabines, Æqui, and Hernici?
The arms of Rome alone? no, 'twas her virtue,
That sole surviving good, which brave men keep,
Though fate and warring worlds combine against them:
This still is mine—and I'll preserve it, Romans!
The wealth of Plutus shall not bribe it from me!
If you, alas! require this sacrifice,
Carthage herself was less my foe than Rome;
She took my freedom—she could take no more;
But Rome, to crown her work, would take my honour.
My friends! if you deprive me of my chains,
I am no more than any other slave:
Yes, Regulus becomes a common captive,
A wretched, lying, perjur'd fugitive!
But if, to grace my bonds, you leave my honour,
I shall be still a Roman, though a slave. [ges?
Lic. What faith should be observ'd with sava-
What promise should be kept which bonds extort?
Reg. Unworthy subterfuge! ah! let us leave
To the wild Arab and the faithless Moor
These wretched maxims of deceit and fraud:
Examples ne'er can justify the coward.
The brave man never seeks a vindication,
Save from his own just bosom and the gods;
From principle, not precedent, he acts;
As that arraigns him, or as that acquits,
He stands or falls; condemn'd or justified.
Lic. Rome is no more, if Regulus departs.
Reg. Let Rome remember Regulus must die;
Nor would the moment of my death be distant,

If nature's work had been reserv'd for nature:
What Carthage means to do, she would have
As speedily, perhaps, at least as surely. [done,
My wearied life has almost reach'd its goal;
The once warm current stagnates in these veins,
Or through its icy channels slowly creeps—
View the weak arm; mark the pale, furrow'd
cheek,
The slacken'd sinew, and the dim sunk eye,
And tell me then I must not think of dying!
How can I serve you else? My feeble limbs
Would totter now beneath the armour's weight,
The burden of that body it once shielded.
You see, my friends, you see, my countrymen,
I can no longer show myself a Roman,
Except by dying like one —Gracious Heaven
Points out a way to crown my days with glory;
O, do not frustrate then the will of Jove,
And close a life of virtue with disgrace.
Come, come, I know my noble Romans better;
I see your souls, I read repentance in them;
You all applaud me—nay, you wish my chains;
'Twas nothing but excess of love misled you,
And, as you're Romans, you will conquer that.
Yes!—I perceive your weakness is subdued—
Seize, seize the moment of returning virtue;
Throw to the ground, my sons, those hostile
Retard no longer Regulus's triumph; [arms;
I do request it of you as a friend,
I call you to your duty as a patriot,
And—were I still your gen'ral, I'd command
you.

Lic. Lay down your arms—let Regulus depart.

(*To the people, who clear the way, and quit their arms.*)

Reg. Gods! gods! I thank you—you indeed
are righteous. [oh, father!

Pub. See every man disarm'd. Oh, Rome!

Att. Hold, hold, my heart. Alas! they all
obey. [thee

Reg. The way is clear Hamilcar, I attend

Ham. Why, I begin to envy this old man!
(*aside.*)

Man. Not the proud victor on the day of triumph,
Warm from the slaughter of dispeopled realms,
Though conquer'd princes grace his chariot
wheels,
Though tributary monarchs wait his nod,
And vanquish'd nations bend the knee before him,
E'er shone with half the lustre that surrounds
This voluntary sacrifice for Rome!
Who loves his country will obey her laws;
Who most obeys them is the truest patriot.

Reg. Be our last parting worthy of ourselves.
Farewell! my friends. I bless the gods who
rule us,
Since I must leave you, that I leave you Romans.
Preserve the glorious name untainted still,
And you shall be the rulers of the globe,
The arbiters of earth. The farthest east,
Beyond where Ganges rolls his rapid flood,
Shall proudly emulate the Roman name.
(*Kneels.*) Ye gods, the guardians of this glorious people,
Who watch with jealous eye Æneas' race,
This land of heroes I commit to you! [care!
This ground, these walls, this people, be your
Oh! bless them, bless them with a liberal hand!
Let fortitude and valour, truth and justice,
For ever flourish and increase among them!
And if some baneful planet threat the capitol
With its malignant influence, oh! avert it.
Be Regulus the victim of your wrath.—
On this white head be all your vengeance pour'd,
But spare, oh! spare, and bless immortal Rome!
Ah! tears? my Romans weep! Farewell! farewell!

ATTILIA *struggles to get to* REGULUS—*is prevented—she faints—he fixes his eye steadily on her for some time, and then departs to the ships.*

MANLIUS (*looking after him.*) Farewell! farewell! thou glory of mankind!
Protector, father, saviour of thy country!
Through Regulus the Roman name shall live,
Shall triumph over time, and mock oblivion
Farewell! thou pride of this immortal coast!
'Tis Rome alone a Regulus can boast

EPILOGUE.

BY DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

WHAT son of physic, but his heart extends,
As well as hand, when call'd on by his friends?
What landlord is so weak to make you fast,
When guests like you bespeak a good repast?
But weaker still were he whom fate has plac'd
To sooth your cares, and gratify your taste,
Should he neglect to bring before your eyes,
Those dainty dramas which from genius rise;
Whether your luxury be to smile or weep,
His and your profits just proportion keep.
To-night he brought, nor fears a due reward,
A Roman Patriot by a Female Bard.
Britons, who feel his flame, his worth will rate,
No common spirit his, no common fate.
INFLEXIBLE and CAPTIVE must be great.
"How!" cries a sucking fop, thus lounging,
straddling,
(Whose head shows want of ballast by its nod
dling),
"A woman write? Learn, madam, of your
betters,
And read a noble lord's posthumous letters.
There you will learn the sex may merit praise,
By making puddings—not by making plays:
They can make tea and mischief, dance and sing;
Their heads, though full of feathers, can't take
wing." [chance,
I thought they could, sir; now and then, by
Maids fly to Scotland, and some wives to France
He still went nodding on—"Do all she can,
Woman's a trifle—plaything—like her fan."
Right, sir, and when a wife, the *rattle* of a man.
And shall such things as these become the *test*
Of female worth? the fairest and the best

Of all heaven's creatures? for so Milton sung us,
And, with such champions, who shall dare to
wrong us? [ray'd;
Come forth, proud man, in all your pow'rs ar-
Shine out in all your splendour—who's afraid?
Who on French wit has made a glorious war,
Defended Shakspeare, and subdued Voltaire!—
Woman!*—Who, rich in knowledge, knows no
pride,
Can boast ten tongues, and yet not satisfied!

* Mrs. Montague, author of an essay on the writings of Shakspeare.

Woman!* Who lately sung the sweetest lay?
A woman! woman! woman!† still I say.
Well then, who dares deny our power and might?
Will any married man dispute our right?
Speak boldly, sirs,—your wives are not in sight.
What! are you silent? then you are content;
Silence, the proverb tells us, gives consent.
Critics, will you allow our honest claim?
Are you dumb too! This night has fix'd our
fame.

* Mrs Carter, well known for her skill in ancient and modern languages.

† Miss Aikin, whose poems were just published.

PERCY:

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.

REMARKS.

The feuds of the rival houses of Percy and of Douglas have furnished materials for this melancholy tale, in which Mrs. More* has embodied many judicious sentiments and excellent passages, producing a forcible lesson to parental tyranny. The victim of her husband's unreasonable jealousy, *Elwina's* virtuous conflict is pathetic and interesting; while *Percy's* sufferings, and the vain regret of Earl *Raby*, excite and increase our sympathy.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PERCY, Earl of Northumberland,........................*Mr. Lewis.*
EARL DOUGLAS,.......................................*Mr. Wroughton.*
EARL RABY, Elwina's Father,.............................*Mr Aickin.*
EDRIC, Friend to Douglas,.............................*Mr. Whitefield.*
HARCOURT, Friend to Percy,............................*Mr. Robson.*
SIR HUBERT, a Knight,...................................*Mr. Hull.*

ELWINA,..*Mrs. Barry.*
BIRTHA, ...*Mrs. Jackson.*

Knights, Guards, Attendants, &c.
SCENE.—Raby Castle, in Durham.

ACT I.

SCENE I—*A Gothic Hall.*

Enter EDRIC *and* BIRTHA.

Bir. What may this mean? Earl Douglas has enjoin'd thee
To meet him here in private?
Edr. Yes, my sister,
And this injunction I have oft receiv'd;
But when he comes, big with some painful secret,
He starts, looks wild, then drops ambiguous hints,
Frowns, hesitates, turns pale, and says 'twas nothing;
Then feigns to smile, and by his anxious care
To prove himself at ease, betrays his pain.
Bir. Since my short sojourn here, I've mark'd this earl,
And though the ties of blood unite us closely,
I shudder at his haughtiness of temper,
Which not his gentle wife, the bright Elwina,
Can charm to rest. Ill are their spirits pair'd;
His is the seat of frenzy, hers of softness,
His love is transport, hers is trembling duty;
Rage in his soul is as the whirlwind fierce,
While hers ne'er felt the power of that rude passion.
Edr. Perhaps the mighty soul of Douglas mourns,
Because inglorious love detains him here,
While our bold knights, beneath the Christian standard,
Press to the bulwarks of Jerusalem.
Bir. Though every various charm adorns Elwina,

* Of this estimable lady, a cotemporary writer says, "This lady has for many years flourished in the literary world, which she has richly adorned by a variety of labours, all possessing strong marks of excellence. In the cause of religion and society, her labours are original and indefatigable; and the industrious poor have been once enlightened by her instructions, and supported by her bounty."

And though the noble Douglas dotes to madness,
Yet some dark mystery involves their fate:
The canker grief devours Elwina's bloom,
And on her brow meek resignation sits,
Hopeless, yet uncomplaining.
Edr. 'Tis most strange.
Bir. Once, not long since, she thought herself alone;
'Twas then the pent-up anguish burst its bounds;
With broken voice, clasp'd hands, and streaming eyes,
She call'd upon her father, call'd him cruel,
And said her duty claim'd far other recompense.
Edr. Perhaps the absence of the good Lord Raby,
Who, at her nuptials, quitted this fair castle,
Resigning it to her, may thus afflict her.
Hast thou e'er question'd her, good Birtha?
Bir. Often,
But hitherto in vain; and yet she shows me
The endearing kindness of a sister's love;
But if I speak to Douglas——
Edr See! he comes.
It would offend him should he find you here.

Enter DOUGLAS.

Dou. How! Edric and his sister in close conference?
Do they not seem alarm'd at my approach?
And see, how suddenly they part! Now Edric,
[*Exit* BIRTHA.
Was this well done? or was it like a friend,
When I desir'd to meet thee here alone,
With all the warmth of trusting confidence,
To lay my bosom naked to thy view,
And show thee all its weakness, was it well
To call thy sister here, to let her witness
Thy friend's infirmity?—perhaps to tell her—
Edr. My lord, I nothing know; I came to learn
Dou. Nay then thou dost suspect there 's something wrong?
Edr. If we were bred from infancy together,
If I partook in all thy youthful griefs,
And every joy thou knew'st was doubly mine,
Then tell me all the secret of thy soul:
Or have these few short months of separation,
The only absence we have ever known,
Have these so rent the bands of love asunder,
That Douglas should distrust his Edric's truth?
Dou. My friend, I know thee faithful as thou'rt brave,
And I will trust thee—but not now, good Edric.
'Tis past, 'tis gone, it is not worth the telling,
'Twas wrong to cherish what disturb'd my peace;
I'll think of it no more.
Edr. Transporting news!
I fear'd some hidden trouble vex'd your quiet.
In secret I have watch'd——
Dou. Ha! watch'd in secret?
A spy, employ'd, perhaps, to note my actions.
What have I said? Forgive me, thou art noble:
Yet do not press me to disclose my grief,
For when thou know'st it, I perhaps shall hate thee
As much, my Edric, as I hate myself
For my suspicions—I am ill at ease.
Edr. How will the fair Elwina grieve to hear it!
Dou. Hold, Edric, hold—thou hast touch'd the fatal string
That wakes me into madness. Hear me then,
But let the deadly secret be secured
With bars of adamant in thy close breast.
Think on the curse which waits on broken oaths;
A knight is bound by more than vulgar ties,
And perjury in thee were doubly damn'd.
Well then, the king of England—
Edr. Is expected
From distant Palestine.
Dou. Forbid it, Heaven!
For with him comes—
Edr. Ah! who?
Dou. Peace, peace,
For see Elwina 's here. Retire, my Edric;
When next we meet, thou shalt know all. Farewell.
[*Exit* EDRIC
Now to conceal with care my bosom's anguish,
And let her beauty chase away my sorrows!
Yes, I would meet her with a face of smiles—
But 'twill not be.

Enter ELWINA.

Elw. Alas, 'tis ever thus!
Thus ever clouded is his angry brow. [*Aside.*
Dou. I were too bless'd, Elwina, could I hope
You met me here by choice, or that your bosom
Shar'd the warm transports mine must ever feel
At your approach.
Elw. My lord, if I intrude,
The cause which brings me claims at least forgiveness:
I fear you are not well, and come, unbidden,
Except by faithful duty, to inquire,
If haply in my power, my little power
I have the means to minister relief
To your affliction?
Dou What unwonted goodness
O I were bless'd above the lot of man,
If tenderness, not duty, brought Elwina;
Cold, ceremonious, and unfeeling duty,
That wretched substitute for love. but know,
The heart demands a heart, nor will be paid
With less than what it gives E'en now, Elwina,
The glistening tear stands trembling in your eyes,
Which cast their mournful sweetness on the ground,
As if they fear'd to raise their beams to mine,
And read the language of reproachful love.
Elw My lord, I hop'd the thousand daily proofs
Of my obedience——
Dou. Death to all my hopes!
Heart-rending word!—obedience! what 's obedience?
'Tis fear, 'tis hate, 'tis terror, 'tis aversion,
'Tis the cold debt of ostentatious duty,
Paid with insulting caution, to remind me
How much you tremble to offend a tyrant
So terrible as Douglas —O, Elwina——
While duty measures the regard it owes
With scrupulous precision and nice justice,
Love never reasons, but profusely gives,
Gives, like a thoughtless prodigal, its all,
And trembles then, lest it has done too little.
Elw. Indeed I'm most unhappy that my cares,
And my solicitude to please, offend.
Dou True tenderness is less solicitous,
Less prudent and more fond; the enamour'd heart
Conscious it loves, and bless'd in being lov'd,
Reposes on the object it adores,
And trusts the passion it inspires and feels.
Thou hast not learn'd how terrible it is
To feed a hopeless flame.—But hear, Elwina,
Thou most obdurate, hear me.—
Elw. Say, my lord,
For your own lips shall vindicate my fame,
Since at the altar I became your wife,
Can malice charge me with an act, a word,
I ought to blush at? Have I not still liv'd

As open to the eye of observation,
As fearless innocence should ever live?
I call attesting angels to be witness,
If in my open deed, or secret thought,
My conduct, or my heart, they've aught discern'd
Which did not emulate their purity.

Dou. This vindication ere you were accus'd,
This warm defence, repelling all attacks
Ere they are made, and construing casual words
To formal accusations, trust me, Madam,
Shows rather an alarm'd and vigilant spirit,
For ever on the watch to guard its secret,
Than the sweet calm of fearless innocence.
Who talk'd of guilt? Who testified suspicion?

Elw. Learn, Sir, that virtue, while 'tis free from blame,
Is modest, lowly, meek, and unassuming;
Not apt, like fearful vice, to shield its weakness
Beneath the studied pomp of boastful phrase
Which swells to hide the poverty it shelters;
But, when this virtue feels itself suspected,
Insulted, set at nought, its whiteness stain'd,
It then grows proud, forgets its humble worth,
And rates itself above its real value,

Dou. I did not mean to chide! but think, O think,
What pangs must rend this fearful doting heart,
To see you sink impatient of the grave,
To feel, distracting thought! to feel you hate me!

Elw. What if the slender thread by which I hold
This poor precarious being soon must break,
Is it Elwina's crime, or Heaven's decree?
Yet I shall meet, I trust, the king of terrors,
Submissive and resign'd, without one pang,
One fond regret, at leaving this gay world.

Dou. Yes, Madam, there is one, one man ador'd,
For whom your sighs will heave, your tears will flow,
For whom this hated world will still be dear,
For whom you still would live——

Elw. Hold, hold my lord,
What may this mean?

Dou. Ah! I have gone too far.
What have I said?—Your father, sure, your father,
The good Lord Raby, may at least expect
One tender sigh

Elw. Alas, my lord! I thought
The precious incense of a daughter's sighs
Might rise to heaven, and not offend its ruler.

Dou. 'Tis true; yet Raby is no more belov'd
Since he bestow'd his daughter's hand on Douglas:
That was a crime the dutiful Elwina
Can never pardon; and believe me, Madam,
My love's so nice, so delicate my honour,
I am asham'd to owe my happiness
To ties which make you wretched. [*Exit* DOUGLAS.

Elw. Ah! how 's this?
Though I have ever found him fierce and rash,
Full of obscure surmises and dark hints,
Till now he never ventur'd to accuse me.
"Yet there is one, one man belov'd, ador'd,
For whom your tears will flow"—these were his words—
And then the wretched subterfuge of Raby—
How poor th' evasion!—But my Birtha comes.

Enter BIRTHA.

Bir. Crossing the portico I met Lord Douglas,
Disorder'd were his looks, his eyes shot fire;
He call'd upon your name with such distraction
I fear'd some sudden evil had befallen you.

Elw. Not sudden: no; long has the storm been gathering,
Which threatens speedily to burst in ruin
On this devoted head.

Bir I ne'er beheld
Your gentle soul so ruffled, yet I've marked you,
While others thought you happiest of the happy,
Bless'd with whate'er the world calls great, or good,
With all that nature, all that fortune gives,
I've mark'd you bending with a weight of sorrow.

Elw. O I will tell thee all! thou couldst not find
An hour, a moment in Elwina's life,
When her full heart so long'd to ease its burden,
And pour its sorrows in thy friendly bosom:
Hear then, with pity hear, my tale of wo,
And, O forgive, kind nature, filial piety,
If my presumptuc [illegible]
Yes, Birtha, that belov'd, that cruel father,
Has doom'd me to a life of hopeless anguish,
To die of grief ere half my days are number'd;
Doom'd me to give my trembling hand to Douglas,
'Twas all I had to give—my heart was—Percy's.

Bir. What do I hear?

Elw My misery, not my crime
Long since the battle 'twixt the rival houses
Of Douglas and of Percy, for whose hate
This mighty globe 's too small a theatre,
One summer's morn, my father chas'd the deer
On Cheviot Hills, Northumbria's fair domain.

Bir. On that fam'd spot where first the feuds commenc'd
Between the earls?

Elw The same. During the chace,
Some of my father's knights receiv'd an insult
From the Lord Percy's herdsmen, churlish foresters,
Unworthy of the gentle blood they serv'd.
My father, proud and jealous of his honour,
(Thou know'st the fiery temper of our barons,)
Swore that Northumberland had been concern'd
In this rude outrage, nor would hear of peace,
Or reconcilement, which the Percy offer'd;
But bade me hate, renounce, and banish him.
O! 'twas a task too hard for all my duty:
I strove, and wept; I strove—but still I lov'd

Bir. Indeed 'twas most unjust; but say what follow'd?

Elw. Why should I dwell on the disastrous tale?
Forbid to see me, Percy soon embark'd
With our great king against the Saracen.
Soon as the jarring kingdoms were at peace,
Earl Douglas, whom till then I ne'er had seen,
Came to this castle; 'twas my hapless fate
To please him.—Birtha! thou can'st tell what followed:
But who shall tell the agonies I felt?
My barbarous father forc'd me to dissolve
The tender vows himself had bid me form——
He dragg'd me trembling, dying, to the altar,
I sigh'd, I struggled, fainted, and complied.

Bir. Did Douglas know, a marriage had been once
Propos'd 'twixt you and Percy?

Elw. If he did,
He thought, like you, it was a match of policy,
Nor knew our love surpass'd our fathers' prudence.

Bir. Should he now find he was the instrument
Of the Lord Raby's vengeance?

Elw. 'Twere most dreadful!
My father lock'd this motive in his breast,
And feign'd to have forgot the chace of Cheviot.

Some moons have now completed their slow course
Since my sad marriage.—Percy still is absent.
Bir. Nor will return before his sov'reign comes.
Elw. Talk not of his return! this coward heart
Can know no thought of peace but in his absence.
How, Douglas here again? some fresh alarm!

Enter DOUGLAS, *agitated, with letters in his hand.*

Dou. Madam, your pardon—
Elw. What disturbs my lord?
Dou. Nothing.—Disturb! I ne'er was more at [ease.
These letters from your father give us notice
He will be here to-night:—He farther adds,
The king's each hour expected.
Elw. How? the king?
Said you, the king?
Dou. And 'tis Lord Raby's pleasure
That you among the foremost bid him welcome.
You must attend the court.
Elw. Must I, my lord?
Dou. Now to observe how she receives the news! [*Aside.*
Elw. I must not,—cannot —By the tender love
You have so oft profess'd for poor Elwina,
Indulge this one request—O let me stay!
Dou. Enchanting sounds! she does not wish to go— [*Aside*
Elw. The bustling world, the pomp which waits on greatness,
Ill suits my humble, unambitious soul;—
Then leave me here, to tread the safer path
Of private life, here, where my peaceful course
Shall be as silent as the shades around me;
Nor shall one vagrant wish be e'er allow'd
To stray beyond the bounds of Raby Castle.
Dou. O music to my ears! [*Aside*] Can you resolve
To hide those wondrous beauties in the shade,
Which rival kings would cheaply buy with empire?
Can you renounce the pleasures of a court,
Whose roofs resound with minstrelsy and mirth?
Elw. My lord, retirement is a wife's best duty,
And virtue's safest station is retreat
Dou. My soul 's in transports! [*Aside*] But can you forego
What wins the soul of woman—admiration?
A world, where charms inferior far to yours
Only presume to shine when you are absent!
Will you not long to meet the public gaze?
Long to eclipse the fair, and charm the brave?
Elw. These are delights in which the mind partakes not.
Dou. I'll try her farther. [*Aside*
[*Takes her hand, and looks steadfastly at her as he speaks.*
But reflect once more:
When you shall hear that England's gallant peers,
Fresh from the fields of war, and gay with glory,
All vain with conquest, and elate with fame,
When you shall hear these princely youths contend,
In many a tournament, for beauty's prize;
When you shall hear of revelry and masking,
Of mimic combats and of festive halls,
Of lances shiver'd in the cause of love,
Will you not then repent, then wish your fate,
Your happier fate, had till that hour reserv'd you
For some plumed conqueror?
Elw. My fate, my lord,
Is now bound up with yours.
Dou. Here let me kneel—
Yes, I will kneel, and gaze, and weep, and won- [der;
Thou paragon of goodness!—pardon, pardon.
[*Kisses her hand.*

I am convinc'd—I can no longer doubt,
Nor talk, nor hear, nor reason, nor reflect.
—I must retire, and give a loose to joy.
[*Exit* DOUGLAS
Bir. The king returns.
Elw. And with him Percy comes!
Bir. You needs must go.
Elw. Shall I solicit ruin,
And pull destruction on me ere its time?
I, who have held it criminal to name him?
I will not go—I disobey thee, Douglas,
But disobey thee to preserve thy honour. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Hall.

Enter DOUGLAS, *speaking.*

See that the traitor instantly be seiz'd,
And strictly watch'd; let none have access to him.
—O jealousy, thou aggregate of woes!
Were there no hell, thy torments would create one.
But yet she may be guiltless—may? she must.
How beautiful she look'd! pernicious beauty!
Yet innocent as bright seem'd the sweet blush
That mantled on her cheek. But not for me,
But not for me, those breathing roses blow!
And then she wept—What! can I bear her tears?
Well- let her weep—her tears are for another;
O did they fall for me, to dry their streams
I'd drain the choicest blood that feeds this heart,
Nor think the drops I shed were half so precious.
[*He stands in a musing posture.*

Enter LORD RABY.

Raby. Sure I mistake—am I in Raby Castle?
Impossible; that was the seat of smiles;
And Cheerfulness and Joy were household gods.
I us'd to scatter pleasures when I came,
And every servant shar'd his lord's delight;
But now Suspicion and Distrust dwell here,
And Discontent maintains a sullen sway.
Where is the smile unfeign'd, the jovial welcome,
Which cheer'd the sad, beguil'd the pilgrim's pain,
And made Dependency forget its bonds?
Where is the ancient, hospitable hall,
Whose vaulted roof once rung with harmless mirth,
Where every passing stranger was a guest,
And every guest a friend? I fear me much,
If once our nobles scorn their rural seats,
Their rural greatness, and their vassals' love,
Freedom and English grandeur are no more.
Dou. [*Advancing*] My lord, you are welcome.
Raby. Sir, I trust I am;
But yet methinks I shall not feel I'm welcome
Till my Elwina bless me with her smiles:
She was not wont with ling'ring step to meet me,
Or greet my coming with a cold embrace;
Now, I extend my longing arms in vain:
My child, my darling, does not come to fill them.
O they were happy days, when she would fly
To meet me from the camp, or from the chace,
And with her fondness overpay my toils!
How eager would her tender hands unbrace
The ponderous armour from my war-worn limbs,
And pluck the helmet which oppos'd her kiss!
Dou. O sweet delights, that never must be mine!
Raby. What do I hear?
Dou. Nothing: inquire no farther.
Raby My lord, if you respect an old man's peace,
If e'er you doted on my much-lov'd child,
As 'tis most sure you made me think you did,

Then, by the pangs which you may one day feel,
When you, like me, shall be a fond, fond father,
And tremble for the treasure of your age,
Tell me what this alarming silence means?
You sigh, you do not speak, nay more, you hear not;
Your lab'ring soul turns inward on itself,
As there were nothing but your own sad thoughts
Deserv'd regard. Does my child live?

Dou. She does.

Raby. To bless her father!

Dou. And to curse her husband!

Raby. Ah! have a care, my lord, I'm not so old—

Dou. Nor I so base, that I should tamely bear it;
Nor am I so inur'd to infamy,
That I can say, without a burning blush,
She lives to be my curse!

Raby. How 's this?

Dou. I thought
The lily opening to the heaven's soft dews,
Was not so fragrant, and was not so chaste.

Raby. Has she prov'd otherwise? I'll not believe it.
Who has traduc'd my sweet, my innocent child?
Yet she 's too good to 'scape calumnious tongues.
I know that Slander loves a lofty mark:
It saw her soar a flight above her fellows,
And hurl'd its arrow to her glorious height,
To reach her heart, and bring her to the ground.

Dou. Had the rash tongue of Slander so presum'd,
My vengeance had not been of that slow sort
To need a prompter; nor should any arm,
No, not a father's, dare dispute with mine,
The privilege to die in her defence.
None dares accuse Elwina, but—

Raby But who?

Dou. But Douglas

Raby. [*Puts his hand to his sword.*] You?—
O spare my age's weakness!
You do not know what 'tis to be a father;
You do not know, or you would pity me,
The thousand tender throbs, the nameless feelings,
The dread to ask, and yet the wish to know,
When we adore and fear; but wherefore fear?
Does not the blood of Raby fill her veins?

Dou. Percy;—know'st thou that name?

Raby. How? What of Percy?

Dou. He loves Elwina, and, my curses on him!
He is belov'd again.

Raby. I'm on the rack!

Dou. Not the two Theban brothers bore each other
Such deep, such deadly hate as I and Percy.

Raby. But tell me of my child.

Dou. [*Not minding him.*] As I and Percy!
When at the marriage rites, O rites accurs'd!
I seiz'd her trembling hand, she started back,
Cold horror thrill'd her veins, her tears flow'd fast.
Fool that I was, I thought 'twas maiden fear;
Dull, doting ignorance: beneath those terrors,
Hatred for me and love for Percy lurk'd.

Raby. What proof of guilt is this?

Dou. E'er since our marriage,
Our days have still been cold and joyless all;
Painful restraint, and hatred ill disguis'd,
Her sole return for all my waste of fondness.
This very morn I told her 'twas your will
She should repair to court; with all those graces,
Which first subdued my soul, and still enslave it,
She begg'd to stay behind in Raby Castle,
For courts and cities had no charms for her.
Curse my blind love! I was again ensnar'd,
And doted on the sweetness which deceiv'd me.
Just at the hour she thought I should be absent,
(For chance could ne'er have tim'd their guilt so well,)
Arriv'd young Harcourt, one of Percy's knights,
Strictly enjoin'd to speak to none but her;
I seiz'd the miscreant: hitherto he 's silent,
But tortures soon shall force him to confess!

Raby. Percy is absent—They have never met.

Dou. At what a feeble hold you grasp for succour!
Will it content me that her person 's pure?
No, if her alien heart dotes on another,
She is unchaste, were not that other Percy.
Let vulgar spirits basely wait for proof,
She loves another—'tis enough for Douglas.

Raby Be patient.

Dou. Be a tame convenient husband,
And meanly wait for circumstantial guilt?
No—I am nice as the first Cæsar was,
And start at bare suspicion. [*Going.*

Raby. [*Holding him.*] Douglas, hear me:
Thou hast nam'd a Roman husband; if she 's false,
I mean to prove myself a Roman father.

[*Exit* DOUGLAS.

This marriage was my work, and thus I'm punish'd!

Enter ELWINA.

Elw. Where is my father? let me fly to meet [him,
O let me clasp his venerable knees,
And die of joy in his belov'd embrace!

Raby. [*Avoiding her embrace.*] Elwina!

Elw. And is that all? so cold?

Raby. [*Sternly.*] Elwina!

Elw. Then I'm undone indeed! How stern his looks!
I will not be repuls'd, I am your child,
The child of that dear mother you ador'd;
You shall not throw me off, I will grow here,
And, like the patriarch, wrestle for a blessing.

Raby. [*Holding her from him.*] Before I take thee in these aged arms,
Press thee with transport to this beating heart
And give a loose to all a parent's fondness,
Answer, and see thou answer me as truly
As if the dread inquiry came from Heaven,—
Does no interior sense of guilt confound thee?
Canst thou lay all thy naked soul before me?
Can thy unconscious eye encounter mine?
Canst thou endure the probe, and never shrink?
Can thy firm hand meet mine, and never tremble?
Art thou prepar'd to meet the rigid Judge?
Or to embrace the fond, the melting father?

Elw. Mysterious Heaven! to what am I reserv'd!

Raby. Should some rash man, regardless of thy fame,
And in defiance of thy marriage vows,
Presume to plead a guilty passion for thee
What wouldst thou do?

Elw. What honour bids me do.

Raby. Come to my arms! [*They embrace*

Elw. My father!

Raby. Yes, Elwina,
Thou art my child—thy mother's perfect image.

Elw. Forgive these tears of mingled joy and doubt;

For why that question? who should seek to please
The desolate Elwina?

Raby. But if any
Should so presume, canst thou resolve to hate him,
Whate'er his name, whate'er his pride of blood,
Whate'er his former arrogant pretensions?

Elw. Ha!

Raby. Dost thou falter? Have a care, Elwina.

Elw. Sir, do not fear me: am I not your daughter?

Raby. Thou hast a higher claim upon thy honour;
Thou art Earl Douglas' wife.

Elw. [*Weeps.*] I am, indeed!

Raby. Unhappy Douglas!

Elw. Has he then complain'd
Has he presum'd to sully my white fame?

Raby. He knows that Percy——

Elw. Was my destin'd husband;
By your own promise, by a father's promise,
And by a tie more strong, more sacred still,
Mine, by the fast firm bond of mutual love.

Raby. Now, by my fears, thy husband told me truth.

Elw. If he has told thee, that thy only child
Was forc'd a helpless victim to the altar,
Torn from his arms who had her virgin heart,
And forc'd to make false vows to one she hated,
Then I confess that he has told the truth.

Raby. Her words are barbed arrows in my heart.
But 'tis too late. [*Aside*] Thou hast appointed Harcourt
To see thee here by stealth in Douglas' absence?

Elw. No, by my life, nor knew I till this moment
That Harcourt was return'd. Was it for this
I taught my heart to struggle with its feelings?
Was it for this I bore my wrongs in silence?
When the fond ties of early love were broken,
Did my weak soul break out in fond complaints?
Did I reproach thee? Did I call thee cruel?
No—I endur'd it all; and wearied Heaven
To bless the father who destroy'd my peace.

Enter MESSENGER.

Mess. My lord, a knight, Sir Hubert as I think,
But newly landed from the holy wars,
Entreats admittance.

Raby. Let the warrior enter.
[*Exit* MESSENGER.
All private interests sink at his approach;
All selfish cares be for a moment banish'd;
I've now no child, no kindred but my country.

Elw. Weak heart, be still, for what hast thou to fear?

Enter SIR HUBERT.

Raby. Welcome, thou gallant knight! Sir Hubert, welcome!
Welcome to Raby Castle!—In one word,
Is the king safe? Is Palestine subdu'd?

Sir H. The king is safe, and Palestine subdu'd

Raby. Bless'd be the God of armies! Now, Sir Hubert,
By all the saints, thou'rt a right noble knight.
O why was I too old for this crusade!
I think it would have made me young again,
Could I, like thee, have seen the hated crescent
Yield to the Christian cross.—How now, Elwina!
What! cold at news which might awake the dead?
If there's a drop in thy degenerate veins
That glows not now, thou art not Raby's daughter.
It is religion's cause, the cause of Heaven!

Elw. When policy assumes religion's name,
And wears the sanctimonious garb of faith
Only to colour fraud, and license murder,
War then is tenfold guilt.

Raby. Blaspheming girl!

Elw. 'Tis not the crosier, nor the pontiff's robe
The saintly look, nor elevated eye,
Nor Palestine destroy'd, nor Jordan's banks
Deluged with blood of slaughter'd infidels;
No, nor the extinction of the eastern world,
Nor all the mad, pernicious, bigot rage
Of your crusades, can bribe that Power that sees
The motive with the act O blind, to think
That cruel war can please the Prince of Peace!
He, who erects his altar in the heart,
Abhors the sacrifice of human blood,
And all the false devotion of that zeal
Which massacres the world he died to save.

Raby. O impious rage! If thou wouldst shun my curse,
No more, I charge thee.—Tell me, good Sir Hubert,
Say, have our arms achiev'd this glorious deed,
(I fear to ask,) without much Christian blood-shed?

Elw Now, Heaven support me! [*Aside.*

Sir H. My good lord of Raby,
Imperfect is the sum of human glory!
Would I could tell thee that the field was won,
Without the death of such illustrious knights
As make the high-flush'd cheek of victory pale.

Elw. Why should I tremble thus? [*Aside.*

Raby. Who have we lost?

Sir H The noble Clifford, Walsingham, and Grey,
Sir Harry Hastings, and the valiant Pembroke,
All men of choicest note.

Raby. O that my name
Had been enroll'd in such a list of heroes!
If I was too infirm to serve my country,
I might have prov'd my love by dying for her.

Elw Were there no more?

Sir H. But few of noble blood.
But the brave youth who gain'd the palm of glory,
The flower of knighthood, and the plume of war,
Who bore his banner foremost in the field,
Yet conquer'd more by mercy than the sword,
Was Percy.

Elw. Then he lives! [*Aside*

Raby. Did he? Did Percy?
O gallant boy, then I'm thy foe no more;
Who conquers for my country is my friend!
His fame shall add new glories to a house,
Where never maid was false, nor knight disloyal.

Sir H. You do embalm him, lady, with your tears:
They grace the grave of glory where he lies—
He died the death of honour.

Elw. Said'st thou—died?

Sir H. Beneath the towers of Solyma he fell.

Elw Oh!

Sir H. Look to the lady.
[ELWINA *faints in her father's arms.*

Raby. Gentle knight, retire——
'Tis an infirmity of nature in her,
She ever mourns at any tale of blood;
She will be well anon—meantime, Sir Hubert,
You'll grace our castle with your friendly sojourn.

Sir H. I must return with speed—health to the lady. [*Exit*

Raby. Look up, Elwina. Should her husband come!
Yet she revives not.

Enter DOUGLAS.

Dou. Ha——Elwina fainting!

My lord, I fear you have too harshly chid her.
Her gentle nature could not brook your sternness.
She wakes, she stirs, she feels returning life.
My love! [*He takes her hand.*

Elw. O Percy!

Dou. [*Starts.*] Do my senses fail me?

Elw. My Percy, 'tis Elwina calls.

Dou. Hell, hell!

Raby. Retire awhile, my daughter.

Elw. Douglas here,
My father and my husband?—O for pity
[*Exit, casting a look of anguish on both*

Dou. Now, now confess she well deserves my vengeance!
Before my face to call upon my foe!

Raby. Upon a foe who has no power to hurt [thee—
Earl Percy 's slain.

Dou. I live again.—But hold—
Did she not weep? she did, and wept for Percy.
If she laments him, he 's my rival still,
And not the grave can bury my resentment.

Raby. The truly brave are still the truly gen'rous.
Now, Douglas, is the time to prove thee both.
If it be true that she did once love Percy,
Thou hast no more to fear, since he is dead.
Release young Harcourt, let him see Elwina,
'Twill serve a double purpose, 'twill at once
Prove Percy's death, and thy unchang'd affection.
Be gentle to my child, and win her heart
By confidence and unreproaching love.

Dou. By Heaven, thou counsel'st well! it shall be done.
Go set him free, and let him have admittance
To my Elwina's presence.

Raby. Farewell, Douglas.
Show thou believ'st her faithful, and she'll prove so. [*Exit.*

Dou. Northumberland is dead—that thought is peace!
Her heart may yet be mine, transporting hope!
Percy was gentle, even a foe avows it,
And I'll be milder than a summer's breeze.
Yes, thou most lovely, most ador'd of women,
I'll copy every virtue, every grace,
Of my bless'd rival, happier even in death
To be thus lov'd, than living to be scorn'd. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Garden at Raby Castle, with a Bower.

Enter PERCY *and* SIR HUBERT.

Sir H. That Percy lives, and is return'd in safety,
More joys my soul than all the mighty conquests
That sun beheld, which rose on Syria's ruin.

Per. I've told thee, good Sir Hubert, by what wonder
I was preserv'd, though number'd with the slain.

Sir H. 'Twas strange, indeed!

Per. 'Twas Heaven's immediate work!
But let me now indulge a dearer joy,
Talk of a richer gift of Mercy's hand;
A gift so precious to my doting heart,
That life preserv'd is but a second blessing.
O Hubert, let my soul indulge its softness!
The hour, the spot, is sacred to Elwina.
This was her fav'rite walk; I well remember,
(For who forgets that loves as I have lov'd?)
'Twas in that very bower she gave this scarf,
Wrought by the hand of love! she bound it on,
And, smiling, cried, Whate'er befall us, Percy,
Be this the sacred pledge of faith between us.
I knelt, and swore, call'd every power to witness,
No time, nor circumstance, should force it from me,
But I would lose my life and that together
Here I repeat my vow.

Sir H. Is this the man
Beneath whose single arm a host was crush'd?
He, at whose name the Saracen turn'd pale?
And when he fell, victorious armies wept,
And mourn'd a conquest they had bought so dear?
How has be chang'd the trumpet's martial note,
And all the stirring clangour of the war,
For the soft melting of the lover's lute!
Why are thine eyes still bent upon the bower?

Per. O Hubert, Hubert, to a soul enamour'd,
There is a sort of local sympathy,
Which, when we view the scenes of early passion,
Paints the bright image of the object lov'd
In stronger colours than remoter scenes
Could ever paint it; realizes shade,
Dresses it up in all the charms it wore,
Talks to it nearer, frames its answers kinder,
Gives form to fancy, and embodies thought.

Sir H. I should not be believ'd in Percy's camp,
If I should tell them that their gallant leader,
The thunder of the war, the bold Northumberland,
Renouncing Mars, dissolv'd in amorous wishes,
Loiter'd in shades, and pined in rosy bowers,
To catch a transient gleam of two bright eyes.

Per. Enough of conquest, and enough of war!
Ambition 's cloy'd—the heart resumes its rights.
When England's king, and England's good requir'd,
This arm not idly the keen falchion brandish'd:
Enough—for vaunting misbecomes a soldier.
I live, I am return'd—am near Elwina! [her;
Seest thou those turrets? Yes, that castle holds
But wherefore tell thee this? for thou hast seen her.
How look'd, what said she? Did she hear the tale
Of my imagin'd death without emotion?

Sir H. Percy, thou hast seen the musk-rose, newly blown,
Disclose its bashful beauties to the sun,
Till an unfriendly, chilling storm descended,
Crush'd all its blushing glories in their prime,
Bow'd its fair head, and blasted all its sweetness;
So droop'd the maid beneath the cruel weight
Of my sad tale.

Per. So tender and so true!

Sir H. I left her fainting in her father's arms,
The dying flower yet hanging on the tree.
Even Raby melted at the news I brought,
And envy'd thee thy glory.

Per. Then I am bless'd!
His hate subdu'd, I've nothing more to fear.

Sir H. My embassy dispatch'd, I left the castle,
Nor spoke to any of Lord Raby's household,
For fear the king should chide the tardiness
Of my return. My joy to find you living
You have already heard.

Per. But where is Harcourt?
Ere this he should have seen her, told her all,
How I surviv'd, return'd—and how I love!
I tremble at the near approach of bliss,
And scarcely can sustain the joy which waits me.

Sir H. Grant, Heaven, the fair one prove but half so true!

Per. O she is truth itself!

Sir H. She may be chang'd,
Spite of her tears, her fainting, and alarms.
I know the sex, know them as nature made 'em,
Not such as lovers wish, and poets feign.

Per. To doubt her virtue were suspecting Heaven,
'Twere little less than infidelity!
And yet I tremble. Why does terror shake
These firm-strung nerves? But 'twill be ever thus,
When fate prepares us more than mortal bliss,
And gives us only human strength to bear it.
Sir H. What beam of brightness breaks through yonder gloom?
Per. Hubert—she comes! by all my hopes, she comes
'Tis she—the blissful vision is Elwina!
But ah! what mean those tears?—She weeps for me!
O transport!—go.—I'll listen unobserv'd,
And for a moment taste the precious joy,
The banquet of a tear which falls for love.
[*Exit* Sir Hubert, Percy *goes into the bower.*

Enter Elwina.

Shall I not weep? and have I then no cause?
If I could break the eternal bands of death,
And wrench the sceptre from his iron grasp;
If I could bid the yawning sepulchre
Restore to life its long committed dust;
If I could teach the slaughtering hand of war
To give me back my dear, my murder'd Percy,
Then I indeed might once more cease to weep.
[Percy *comes out of the bower.*
Per. Then cease, for Percy lives.
Elw Protect me, Heaven!
Per. O joy unspeakable! My life, my love!
End of my toils, and crown of all my cares!
Kind as consenting peace, as conquest bright,
Dearer than arms, and lovelier than renown!
Elw. It is his voice—it is, it is my Percy!
And dost thou live?
Per. I never liv'd till now.
Elw. And did my sighs, and did my sorrows reach thee?
And art thou come at last to dry my tears?
How did'st thou 'scape the fury of the foe?
Per. Thy guardian genius hover'd o'er the field,
And turn'd the hostile spear from Percy's breast,
Lest thy fair image should be wounded there.
But Harcourt should have told thee all my fate,
How I surviv'd——
Elw Alas! I have not seen him.
Oh! I have suffer'd much.
Per Of that no more;
For every minute of our future lives
Shall be so bless'd, that we will learn to wonder
How we could ever think we were unhappy.
Elw Percy—I cannot speak.
Per. Those tears how eloquent!
I would not change this motionless, mute joy,
For the sweet strains of angels. I look down
With pity on the rest of human kind,
However great may be their fame of happiness,
And think their niggard fate has given them nothing,
Not giving thee; or, granting some small blessing,
Denies them my capacity to feel it.
Elw. Alas! what mean you?
Per Can I speak my meaning?
'Tis of such magnitude that words would wrong it:
But surely my Elwina's faithful bosom
Should beat in kind responses of delight,
And feel, but never question, what I mean.
Elw. Hold, hold, my heart, thou hast much more to suffer!
Per. Let the slow form, and tedious ceremony,
Wait on the splendid victims of ambition.
Love stays for none of these. Thy father's soften'd,
He will forget the fatal Cheviot chace;
Raby is brave, and I have serv'd my country,
I would not boast, it was for thee I conquer'd;
Then come, my love.
Elw. O never, never, never!
Per. Am I awake? Is that Elwina's voice?
Elw. Percy, thou most ador'd, and most deceiv'd!
If ever fortitude sustain'd thy soul,
When vulgar minds have sunk beneath the stroke,
Let thy imperial spirit now support thee.—
If thou canst be so wondrous merciful,
Do not, O do not curse me!—but thou wilt,
Thou must—for I have done a fearful deed,
A deed of wild despair, a deed of horror.
I am, I am—
Per. Speak, say, what art thou?
Elw. Married!
Per. Oh!
Elw Percy, I think I begg'd thee not to curse me;
But now I do revoke the fond petition.
Speak! ease thy bursting soul; reproach, upbraid,
O'erwhelm me with thy wrongs——I'll bear it all.
Per. Open, thou earth, and hide me from her sight!
Did'st thou not bid me curse thee?
Elw Mercy! mercy!
Per. And have I 'scaped the Saracen's fell sword
Only to perish by Elwina's guilt?
I would have bared my bosom to the foe,
I would have died, had I but known you wish'd it.
Elw. Percy, I lov'd thee most when most I wrong'd thee;
Yes, by these tears I did.
Per. Married! just Heaven!
Married! to whom? Yet wherefore should I know?
It cannot add fresh horrors to thy crime,
Or my destruction.
Elw Oh! 'twill add to both.
How shall I tell? Prepare for something dreadful.
Hast thou not heard of—Douglas?
Per. Why, 'tis well!
Thou awful Power, why waste thy wrath on me?
Why arm omnipotence to crush a worm?
I could have fallen without this waste of ruin.
Married to Douglas! By my wrongs, I like it;
'Tis perfidy complete, 'tis finish'd falsehood,
'Tis adding fresh perdition to the sin,
And filling up the measure of offence!
Elw. Oh! 'twas my father's deed! he made his child
An instrument of vengeance on thy head.
He wept and threaten'd, sooth'd me, and commanded.
Per. And you complied, most duteously complied!
Elw I could withstand his fury; but his tears,
Ah, they undid me! Percy dost thou know
The cruel tyranny of tenderness?
Hast thou e'er felt a father's warm embrace?
Hast thou e'er seen a father's flowing tears,
And known that thou could'st wipe those tears away?
If thou hast felt, and hast resisted these,
Then thou may'st curse my weakness; but if not,
Thou canst not pity, for thou canst not judge.
Per Let me not hear the music of thy voice,
Or I shall love thee still; I shall forget
Thy fatal marriage and my savage wrongs.
Elw. Dost thou not hate me, Percy?
Per Hate thee? Yes,
As dying martyrs hate the righteous cause

Of that bless'd power for whom they bleed—I hate thee.

[*They look at each other with silent agony.*

Enter HARCOURT.

Har. Forgive, my lord, your faithful knight—
Per. Come, Harcourt,
Come, and behold the wretch who once was Percy.
Har. With grief I've learn'd the whole unhappy tale.
Earl Douglas, whose suspicion never sleeps—
Per. What, is the tyrant jealous?
Elw. Hear him, Percy.
Per. I will command my rage—Go on.
Har. Earl Douglas
Knew, by my arms and my accoutrements,
That I belong'd to you; he questioned much,
And much he menac'd me, but both alike
In vain; he then arrested and confin'd me.
Per. Arrest my knight! The Scot shall answer [it.
Elw. How came you now releas'd?
Har. Your noble father
Obtain'd my freedom, having learn'd from Hubert
The news of Percy's death. The good old lord,
Hearing the king's return, has left the castle
To do him homage.
[*To* PERCY.] Sir, you had best retire;
Your safety is endanger'd by your stay.
I fear should Douglas know——
Per. Should Douglas know!
Why what new magic 's in the name of Douglas?
That it should strike Northumberland with fear?
Go, seek the haughty Scot, and tell him—no—
Conduct me to his presence.
Elw. Percy, hold;
Think not 'tis Douglas—'tis—
Per. I know it well——
Thou mean'st to tell me 'tis Elwina's husband;
But that inflames me to superior madness.
This happy husband, this triumphant Douglas,
Shall not insult my misery with his bliss.
I'll blast the golden promise of his joys.
Conduct me to him—nay, I will have way—
Come, let us seek this husband.
Elw. Percy, hear me.
When I was robb'd of all my peace of mind,
My cruel fortune left me still one blessing,
One solitary blessing, to console me;
It was my fame.—'Tis a rich jewel, Percy,
And I must keep it spotless, and unsoil'd:
But thou wouldst plunder what e'en Douglas spar'd,
And rob this single gem of all its brightness.
Per. Go—thou wast born to rule the fate of [Percy.
Thou art my conqueror still.
Elw. What noise is that?
[HARCOURT *goes to the side of the stage.*
Per. Why art thou thus alarm'd?
Elw. Alas! I feel
The cowardice and terrors of the wicked,
Without their sense of guilt.
Har. My lord, 'tis Douglas.
Elw. Fly, Percy, and for ever
Per. Fly from Douglas?
Elw. Then stay, barbarian, and at once destroy
My life and fame.
Per. That thought is death. I go:
My honour to thy dearer honour yields.
Elw. Yet, yet thou art not gone!
Per. Farewell, farewell! [*Exit* PERCY.
Elw. I dare not meet the searching eye of Douglas.
I must conceal my terrors.

DOUGLAS *at the side with his sword drawn,* EDRIC *holds him.*

Dou. Give me way.
Edr. Thou shalt not enter. [no hell,
Dou. [*Struggling with* EDRIC.] If there were
It would defraud my vengeance of its edge,
And she should live.
[*Breaks from* EDRIC *and comes forward*
Cursed chance! he is not here.
Elw. [*Going.*] I dare not meet his fury.
Dou. See she flies
With every mark of guilt.—Go, search the bower,
[*Aside to* EDRIC.
He shall not thus escape. Madam, return. [*Aloud.*
Now, honest Douglas, learn of her to feign. [*Aside.*
Alone, Elwina? who had just parted hence?
[*With affected composure.*
Elw. My lord, 'twas Harcourt; sure you must have met him. [else!
Dou. O exquisite dissembler! [*Aside.*] No one
Elw. My lord!
Dou. How I enjoy her criminal confusion!
[*Aside.*
You tremble, Madam.
Elw. Wherefore should I tremble?
By your permission Harcourt was admitted;
'Twas no mysterious, secret introduction.
Dou. And yet you seem alarm'd.—If Harcourt's presence
Thus agitates each nerve, makes every pulse
Thus wildly throb, and the warm tides of blood
Mount in quick rushing tumults to your cheek,
If friendship can excite such strong emotions,
What tremors had a lover's presence caus'd?
Elw. Ungenerous man!
Dou. I feast upon her terrors. [*Aside.*
The story of his death was well contriv'd; [*To her.*
But it affects not me; I have a wife,
Compar'd with whom cold Dian was unchaste.
[*Takes her hand.*
But mark me well—though it concerns not you—
If there 's a sin more deeply black than others,
Distinguish'd from the list of common crimes,
A legion in itself, and doubly dear
To the dark prince of hell, it is—hypocrisy.
[*Throws her from him, and exit.*
Elw. Yes, I will bear this fearful indignation!
Thou melting heart, be firm as adamant;
Ye shatter'd nerves, be strung with manly force,
That I may conquer all my sex's weakness,
Nor let this bleeding bosom lodge one thought,
Cherish one wish, or harbour one desire,
That angels may not hear, and Douglas know.
[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Hall.

Enter DOUGLAS, *his sword drawn and bloody in one hand, in the other a letter.* HARCOURT, *wounded.*

Dou. Traitor, no more! this letter shows thy office.
Twice hast thou robb'd me of my dear revenge.
I took thee for thy leader.—Thy base blood
Would stain the noble temper of my sword;
But as the pander to thy master's lust,
Thou justly fall'st by a wrong'd husband's hand.
Har. Thy wife is innocent.
Dou. Take him away.
Har. Percy, revenge my fall!
[*Guards bear* HARCOURT *in*

Dou. Now for the letter!
He begs once more to see her.—So 'tis plain
They have already met!—but to the rest——
[*Reads*] "In vain you wish me to restore the scarf;
Dear pledge of love, while I have life I'll wear it,
'Tis next my heart; no power shall force it thence;
Whene'er you see it in another's hand,
Conclude me dead."—My curses on them both!
How tamely I peruse my shame! but thus,
Thus let me tear the guilty characters
Which register my infamy; and thus,
Thus would I scatter to the winds of heaven
The vile complotters of my foul dishonour.
[*Tears the letter in the utmost agitation.*

Enter EDRIC.

Edr. My lord——
Dou. [*In the utmost fury, not seeing* EDRIC.] The scarf!
Edr. Lord Douglas.
Dou. [*Still not hearing him*] Yes, the scarf!
Percy, I thank thee for the glorious thought!
I'll cherish it; 'twill sweeten all my pangs,
And add a higher relish to revenge!
Edr. My lord!
Dou. How! Edric here?
Edr. What new distress?
Dou. Dost thou expect I should recount my shame,
Dwell on each circumstance of my disgrace,
And swell my infamy into a tale?
Rage will not let me—But—my wife is false.
Edr. Art though convinc'd?
Dou. The chronicles of hell
Cannot produce a falser—But what news
Of her cursed paramour?
Edr. He has escap'd.
Dou. Hast thou examin'd every avenue?
Each spot? the grove? the bower, her favourite haunt?
Edr. I've search'd them all.
Dou. He shall be yet pursued
Set guards at every gate.—Let none depart
Or gain admittance here, without my knowledge.
Edr. What can their purpose be?
Dou Is it not clear?
Harcourt has raised his arm against my life;
He fail'd; the blow is now reserv'd for Percy;
Then, with his sword fresh reeking from my heart,
He'll revel with that wanton o'er my tomb;
Nor will he bring her aught she'll hold so dear,
As the curs'd hand with which he slew her husband.
But he shall die! I'll drown my rage in blood,
Which I will offer as a rich libation
On thy infernal altar, black revenge! [*Exeunt*

SCENE II.—*The Garden.*

Enter ELWINA.

Elw. Each avenue is so beset with guards,
And lynx-ey'd Jealousy so broad awake.
He cannot pass unseen. Protect him, Heaven!

Enter BIRTHA.

My Birtha, is he safe? has he escap'd? [to him,
Bir. I know not. I despatch'd young Harcourt
To bid him quit the castle, as you order'd,
Restore the scarf, and never see you more.
But how the hard injunction was receiv'd,
Or what has happen'd since, I'm yet to learn.
Elw. O when shall I be eas'd of all my cares,
And in the quiet bosom of the grave
Lay down this weary head!—I'm sick at heart!
Should Douglas intercept his flight!
Bir. Be calm;
Douglas this very moment left the castle,
With seeming peace.
Elw. Ah, then, indeed there's danger!
Birtha, whene'er Suspicion feigns to sleep,
'Tis but to make its careless prey secure.
Bir. Should Percy once again entreat to see thee,
'Twere best admit him; from thy lips alone
He will submit to hear his final doom
Of everlasting exile.
Elw. Birtha, no;
If honour would allow the wife of Douglas
To meet his rival, yet I durst not do it.
Percy! too much this rebel heart is thine:
Too deeply should I feel each pang I gave
I cannot hate—but I will banish—thee.
Inexorable duty, O forgive,
If I can do no more!
Bir. If he remains,
As I suspect, within the castle walls,
'Twere best I sought him out.
Elw. Then tell him, Birtha,
But, Oh! with gentleness, with mercy, tell him,
That we must never, never meet again.
The purport of my tale must be severe,
But let thy tenderness embalm the wound
My virtue gives. O soften his despair;
But say—we meet no more.

Enter PERCY.

Rash man, he's here!
[*She attempts to go, he seizes her hand.*
Per. I will be heard; nay, fly not; I will speak;
Lost as I am, I will not be denied
The mournful consolation to complain.
Elw. Percy, I charge thee, leave me.
Per. Tyrant, no:
I blush at my obedience, blush to think
I left thee here alone, to brave the danger
I now return to share.
Elw. That danger's past:
Douglas was soon appeas'd; he nothing knows.
Then leave me, I conjure thee, nor again
Endanger my repose. Yet, ere thou goest,
Restore the scarf.
Per. Unkind Elwina, never!
'Tis all that's left me of my buried joys,
All which reminds me that I once was happy.
My letter told thee I would ne'er restore it.
Elw Letter! what letter?
Per. That I sent by Harcourt.
Elw Which I ne'er receiv'd. Douglas perhaps-
Who knows?
Bir. Harcourt, t'elude his watchfulness,
Might prudently retire.
Elw. Grant Heaven it prove so!
[ELWINA *going*, PERCY *holds her*
Per. Hear me, Elwina; the most savage honour
Forbids not that poor grace.
Elw. It bids me fly thee.
Per Then, ere thou goest, if we indeed must part,
To sooth the horrors of eternal exile,
Say but—thou pity'st me!
Elw. [*Weeps.*] O Percy—pity thee!
Imperious honour;—Surely I may pity him.
Yet, wherefore pity? no, I envy thee:
For thou hast still the liberty to weep,
In thee 'twill be no crime; thy tears are guiltless,
For they infringe no duty, stain no honour,
And blot no vow; but mine are criminal,
Are drops of shame which wash the cheek of guilt,
And every tear I shed dishonours Douglas.

Per. I swear my jealous love e'en grudges thee
Thy sad pre-eminence in wretchedness.
Elw. Rouse, rouse, my slumb'ring virtue!
Percy hear me. [thine,
Heaven, when it gives such high-wrought souls as
Still gives as great occasions to exert them.
If thou wast form'd so noble, great, and gen'rous,
'Twas to surmount the passions which enslave
The gross of human-kind.—Then think, O think,
She, whom thou once didst love, is now another's.
Per. Go on—and tell me that that other's
Douglas. [me:
Elw. Whate'er his name, he claims respect from
His honour 's in my keeping, and I hold
The trust so pure, its sanctity is hurt
E'en by thy presence.
Per. Thou again hast conquer'd.
Celestial virtue, like the angel spirit,
Whose flaming sword defended Paradise,
Stands guard on every charm.—Elwina, yes,
To triumph over Douglas, we'll be virtuous.
Elw. 'Tis not enough to be,—we must appear so:
Great souls disdain the shadow of offence,
Nor must their whiteness wear the stain of guilt.
Per. I shall retract—I dare not gaze upon thee;
My feeble virtue staggers, and again
The fiends of jealousy torment and haunt me.
They tear my heart-strings.——Oh!
Elw. No more;
But spare my injur'd honour the affront
To vindicate itself.
Per. But, love!
Elw. But, glory!
Per. Enough! a ray of thy sublimer spirit
Has warm'd my dying honour to a flame!
One effort and 'tis done. The world shall say,
When they shall speak of my disastrous love,
Percy deserv'd Elwina though he lost her.
Fond tears, blind me not yet! a little longer,
Let my sad eyes a little longer gaze,
And leave their last beams here.
Elw. [*Turns from him.*] I do not weep.
Per. Not weep? then why those eyes avoiding
mine? [cents?
And why that broken voice? those trembling ac-
That sigh which rends my soul?
Elw. No more, no more. [once;
Per. That pang decides it. Come—I'll die at
Thou Power supreme! take all the length of days,
And all the blessings kept in store for me,
And add to her account.—Yet turn once more,
One little look, one last, short glimpse of day,
And then a long dark night.—Hold, hold my heart,
O break not yet, while I behold her sweetness;
For after this dear, mournful, tender moment,
I shall have nothing more to do with life.
Elw. I do conjure thee, go.
Per. 'Tis terrible to nature!
With pangs like these the soul and body part!
And thus, but oh, with far less agony,
The poor departing wretch still grasps at being,
Thus clings to life, thus dreads the dark unknown,
Thus struggles to the last to keep his hold;
And when the dire convulsive groan of death
Dislodges the sad spirit—thus it stays,
And fondly hovers o'er the form it lov'd.
Once and no more—farewell, farewell!
Elw. For ever!
[*They look at each other for some time, then exit* PERCY. *After a pause;*
'Tis past—the conflict 's past! retire, my Birtha,
I would address me to the throne of grace.

Bir. May Heaven restore that peace thy bosom
wants! [*Exit* BIRTHA.
Elw. [*Kneels.*] Look down, thou awful, heart-
inspecting Judge,
Look down with mercy on thy erring creature,
And teach my soul the lowliness it needs!
And if some sad remains of human weakness
Should sometimes mingle with my best resolves,
O breathe thy spirit on this wayward heart,
And teach me to repent th' intruding sin
In it's first birth of thought!
[*Noise within.*] What noise is that?
The clash of swords! should Douglas be return'd?

Enter DOUGLAS *and* PERCY, *fighting.*

Dou. Yield, villain, yield.
Per. Not till this good right arm
Shall fail its master.
Dou. This to thy heart, then.
Per. Defend thy own.
[*They fight;* PERCY *disarms* DOUGLAS.
Dou. Confusion, death, and hell!
Edr. [*Without.*] This way I heard the noise.

Enter EDRIC, *and many Knights and Guards, from every part of the stage.*

Per. Cursed treachery!
But dearly will I sell my life.
Dou. Seize on him.
Per. I'm taken in the toils.
[PERCY *is surrounded by Guards, who take his sword.*
Dou. In the cursed snare
Thou laidst for me, traitor, thyself art caught.
Elw. He never sought thy life.
Dou. Adulteress, peace!
The villain Harcourt too—but he 's at rest.
Per. Douglas, I'm in thy power; but do not
triumph, [me.
Percy 's betray'd, not conquer'd. Come, despatch
Elw. [*To* DOUGLAS.] O do not, do not kill him!
Per. Madam, forbear;
For by the glorious shades of my great fathers,
Their godlike spirit is not so extinct,
That I should owe my life to that vile Scot.
Though dangers close me round on every side,
And death besets me, I am Percy still.
Dou. Sorceress, I'll disappoint thee—he shall die,
Thy minion shall expire before thy face,
That I may feast my hatred with your pangs,
And make his dying groans, and thy fond tears,
A banquet for my vengeance.
Elw. Savage tyrant!
I would have fallen a silent sacrifice, [thee.
So thou had'st spar'd my fame—I never wrong'd
Per. She knew not of my coming;—I alone
Have been to blame—Spite of her interdiction,
I hither came. She 's pure as spotless saints.
Elw. I will not be excus'd by Percy's crime;
So white my innocence, it does not ask
The shade of others' faults to set it off;
Nor shall he need to sully his fair fame
To throw a brighter lustre round my virtue.
Dou. Yet he can only die—but death for honour!
Ye powers of hell, who take malignant joy
In human bloodshed, give me some dire means,
Wild as my hate, and desperate as my wrongs!
Per. Enough of words. Thou know'st I hate
thee, Douglas;
'Tis steadfast, fix'd, hereditary hate,
As thine for me; our fathers did bequeath it
As part of our unalienable birthright,

Which nought but death can end.—Come, end it here.

Elw. [*Kneels.*] Hold, Douglas, hold!—not for myself I kneel,
I do not plead for Percy, but for thee:
Arm not thy hand against thy future peace,
Spare thy brave breast the tortures of remorse,—
Stain not a life of unpolluted honour,
For, oh! as surely as thou strik'st at Percy,
Thou wilt for ever stab the fame of Douglas.

Per. Finish the bloody work.

Dou. Then take thy wish.

Per. Why dost thou start?

[Percy *bares his bosom.* Douglas *advances to stab him, and discovers the scarf.*

Dou. Her scarf upon his breast!
The blasting sight converts me into stone;
Withers my powers like cowardice or age,
Curdles the blood within my shiv'ring veins
And palsies my bold arm

Per. [*Ironically to the Knights.*] Hear you, his friends!
Bear witness to the glorious, great exploit,
Record it in the annals of his race,
That Douglas, the renown'd—the valiant Douglas,
Fenc'd round with guards, and safe in his own castle,
Surpris'd a knight unarm'd, and bravely slew him

Dou. [*Throwing away his dagger.*] 'Tis true—I am the very stain of knighthood.
How is my glory dimm'd!

Elw. It blazes brighter!
Douglas was only brave—he now is generous!

Per. This action has restor'd thee to thy rank,
And makes thee worthy to contend with Percy.

Dou. Thy joy will be as short as 'tis insulting.

[*To* Elwina
And thou, imperious boy, restrain thy boasting.
Thou hast sav'd my honour, not remov'd my hate,
For my soul loathes thee for the obligation.
Give him his sword.

Per. Now thou'rt a noble foe,
And in the field of honour I will meet thee,
As knight encount'ring knight.

Elw. Stay, Percy, stay,
Strike at the wretched cause of all, strike here,
Here sheathe thy thirsty sword, but spare my husband. [me,

Dou. Turn, Madam, and address those vows to
To spare the precious life of him you love.
Even now you triumph in the death of Douglas;
Now your loose fancy kindles at the thought,
And, wildly rioting in lawless hope,
Indulges the adultery of the mind.
But I'll defeat that wish.—Guards, bear her in.
Nay, do not struggle. [*She is borne in.*

Per. Let our deaths suffice,
And reverence virtue in that form inshrin'd.

Dou. Provoke my rage no farther.—I have kindled
The burning torch of never-dying vengeance
At love's expiring lamp.—But mark me, friends,
If Percy's happier genius should prevail,
And I should fall, give him safe conduct hence,
Be all observance paid him.—Go, I follow thee.

[*Aside to* Edric.
Within I've something for thy private ear.

Per. Now shall this mutual fury be appeas'd!
These eager hands shall soon be drench'd in slaughter!
Yes—like two famish'd vultures snuffing blood,
And panting to destroy, we'll rush to combat;
Yet I've the deepest, deadliest cause of hate,
I am but Percy, thou'rt—Elwina's husband.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Elwina's *Apartment*

Elw. Thou who in judgment still remember'st mercy,
Look down upon my woes, preserve my husband!
Preserve my husband! Ah, I dare not ask it;
My very prayers may pull down ruin on me!
If Douglas should survive, what then becomes
Of—him—I dare not name? And if he conquers,
I've slain my husband. Agonizing state!
When I can neither hope, nor think, nor pray,
But guilt involves me. Sure to know the worst
Cannot exceed the torture of suspense,
When each event is big with equal horror.

[*Looks out.*
What, no one yet? This solitude is dreadful!
My horrors multiply!

Enter Birtha.

Thou messenger of wo!

Bir. Of wo, indeed!

Elw. How, is my husband dead?
Oh, speak!

Bir. Your husband lives.

Elw. Then farewell, Percy
He was the tenderest, truest!—Bless him, Heaven,
With crowns of glory and immortal joys!

Bir. Still are you wrong; the combat is not over.
Stay, flowing tears, and give me leave to speak.

Elw. Thou sayest that Percy and my husband [live;
Then why this sorrow?

Bir. What a task is mine!

Elw. Thou talk'st as if I were a child in grief,
And scarce acquainted with calamity.
Speak out, unfold thy tale, whate'er it be,
For I am so familiar with affliction,
It cannot come in any shape will shock me.

Bir. How shall I speak? Thy husband——

Elw. What of Douglas?

Bir. When all was ready for the fatal combat,
He call'd his chosen knights, then drew his sword,
And on it made them swear a solemn oath,
Confirm'd by every rite religion bids,
That they would see perform'd his last request,
Be it whate'er it would. Alas! they swore.

Elw. What did the dreadful preparation mean?

Bir. Then to their hands he gave a poison'd cup,
Compounded of the deadliest herbs and drugs;
Take this, said he, it is a husband's legacy;
Percy may conquer—and—I have a wife!
If Douglas falls, Elwina must not live.

Elw. Spirit of Herod! Why, 'twas greatly thought!
'Twas worthy of the bosom which conceiv'd it!
Yet 'twas too merciful to be his own.
Yes, Douglas, yes, my husband, I'll obey thee,
And bless thy genius which has found the means
To reconcile thy vengeance with my peace,
The deadly means to make obedience pleasant.

Bir. O spare, for pity spare, my bleeding heart:
Inhuman to the last! Unnatural poison!

Elw. My gentle friend, what is there in a name?
The means are little where the end is kind.
If it disturb thee, do not call it poison;
Call it the sweet oblivion of my cares,
My balm of wo, my cordial of affliction,
The drop of mercy to my fainting soul,
My kind dismission from a world of sorrow,

My cup of bliss, my passport to the skies.
Bir. Hark! what alarm is that?
Elw. The combat 's over! [BIRTHA *goes out.*
[ELWINA *stands in a fixed attitude, her hands clasped.*
Now, gracious Heaven, sustain me in the trial,
And bow my spirit to thy great decrees!

Re-enter BIRTHA.

[ELWINA *looks steadfastly at her without speaking.*
Bir. Douglas is fallen.
Elw. Bring me the poison.
Bir. Never.
Elw. Where are the knights? I summon you— [approach!
Draw near, ye awful ministers of fate,
Dire instruments of posthumous revenge!
Come—I am ready; but your tardy justice
Defrauds the injur'd dead.—Go, haste, my friend,
See that the castle be securely guarded,
Let every gate be barr'd—prevent his entrance.
Bir. Whose entrance?
Elw. His—the murderer of my husband.
Bir. He 's single, we have hosts of friends.
Elw. No matter;
Who knows what love and madness may attempt?
But here I swear by all that binds the good,
Never to see him more.—Unhappy Douglas!
O if thy troubled spirit still is conscious
Of our past woes, look down, and hear me swear,
That when the legacy thy rage bequeath'd me
Works at my heart, and conquers struggling [nature,
Ev'n in that agony I'll still be faithful.
She who could never love, shall yet obey thee,
Weep thy hard fate, and die to prove her truth.
Bir. O unexampled virtue! [*A noise without.*
Elw. Heard you nothing?
By all my fears the insulting conqueror comes.
O save me, shield me!

Enter DOUGLAS.

Heaven and earth, my husband!
Dou. Yes——
To blast thee with the sight of him thou hat'st,
Of him thou hast wrong'd, adultress, 'tis thy husband.
Elw. [*Kneels,*] Bless'd be the fountain of eternal [mercy,
This load of guilt is spar'd me! Douglas lives!
Perhaps both live! [*To* BIRTHA.] Could I be sure of that,
The poison were superfluous, joy would kill me.
Dou. Be honest now, for once, and curse thy stars;
Curse thy detested fate which brings thee back
A hated husband, when thy guilty soul
Revell'd in fond, imaginary joys
With my too happy rival: when thou flew'st,
To gratify impatient, boundless passion,
And join adulterous lust to bloody murder;
Then to reverse the scene! polluted woman!
Mine is the transport now, and thine the pang.
Elw. Whence sprung the false report that thou had'st fall'n?
Dou. To give thy guilty breast a deeper wound,
To add a deadlier sting to disappointment,
I rais'd it—I contriv'd—I sent it thee.
Elw. Thou seest me bold, but bold in conscious [virtue.
—That my sad soul may not be stain'd with blood,
That I may spend my few short hours in peace,
And die in holy hope of Heaven's forgiveness,
Relieve the terrors of my lab'ring breast,
Say I am clear of murder—say he lives,
Say but that little word, that Percy lives,
And Alps and oceans shall divide us ever,
As far as universal space can part us.
Dou. Canst thou renounce him?
Elw. Tell me that he lives,
And thou shalt be the ruler of my fate,
For ever hide me in a convent's gloom,
From cheerful day-light, and the haunts of men,
Where sad austerity, and ceaseless prayer
Shall share my uncomplaining day between them.
Dou. O, hypocrite! now, Vengeance, to thy office.
I had forgot—Percy commends him to thee,
And by my hand—
Elw. How—by thy hand?
Dou. Has sent thee
This precious pledge of love.
[*He gives her* PERCY'S *scarf.*
Elw. Then Percy 's dead!
Dou. He is.—O great revenge, thou now art [mine!
See how convulsive sorrow rends her frame!
This, this is transport!—injur'd honour now
Receives its vast, its ample retribution.
She sheds no tears, her grief is too highly wrought;
'Tis speechless agony.—She must not faint—
She shall not 'scape her portion of the pain.
No! she shall feel the fulness of distress,
And wake to keen perception of her loss.
Bir. Monster! Barbarian! leave her to her sorrows.
Elw. [*In a low broken voice.*] Douglas—think not I faint, because thou seest
The pale and bloodless cheek of wan despair.
Fail me not yet, my spirits; thou cold heart,
Cherish thy freezing current one short moment,
And bear thy mighty load a little longer.
Dou. Percy, I must avow it, bravely fought,—
Died as a hero should;—but, as he fell,
(Hear it, fond wanton!) call'd upon thy name,
And his last guilty breath sigh'd out—Elwina!
Come—give a loose to rage, and feed thy soul
With wild complaints, and womanish upbraidings.
Elw. [*In a low solemn voice.*] No.
The sorrow 's weak that wastes itself in words,
Mine is substantial anguish—deep, not loud;
I do not rave—Resentment 's the return
Of common souls for common injuries.
Light grief is proud of state, and courts compas- [sion;
But there 's a dignity in cureless sorrow,
A sullen grandeur which disdains complaint;
Rage is for little wrongs—Despair is dumb.
[*Exeunt* ELWINA *and* BIRTHA.
Dou. Why, this is well! her sense of wo is strong!
The sharp, keen tooth of gnawing grief devours [her,
Feeds on her heart, and pays me back my pangs.
Since I must perish, 'twill be glorious ruin:
I fall not singly, but, like some proud tower,
I'll crush surrounding objects in the wreck,
And make the devastation wide and dreadful.

Enter RABY.

Raby. O whither shall a wretched father turn,
Where fly for comfort? Douglas, art thou here?
I do not ask for comfort at thy hands.
I'd but one little casket, where I lodged
My precious hoard of wealth, and, like an idiot,
I gave my treasure to another's keeping,
Who threw away the gem, nor knew its value,
But left the plunder'd owner quite a beggar.
Dou. What art thou come to see thy race dishonour'd?

And thy bright sun of glory set in blood?
I would have spar'd thy virtues, and thy age,
The knowledge of her infamy.

Raby. 'Tis false. [blood.
Had she been base, this sword had drank her

Dou. Ha! dost thou vindicate the wanton?

Raby. Wanton?
Thou hast defam'd a noble lady's honour—
My spotless child—in me behold her champion:
The strength of Hercules will nerve this arm,
When lifted in defence of innocence.
The daughter's virtue for the father's shield,
Will make old Raby still invincible.
[*Offers to draw.*

Dou. Forbear.

Raby. Thou dost disdain my feeble arm,
And scorn my age.

Dou. There will be blood enough;
Nor need thy wither'd veins, old lord, be drain'd,
To swell the copious stream.

Raby. Thou wilt not kill her?

Dou. Oh, 'tis a day of horror!

Enter EDRIC *and* BIRTHA.

Edr. Where is Douglas?
I come to save him from the deadliest crime
Revenge did ever meditate.

Dou. What meanest thou? [wife.

Edr. This instant fly, and save thy guiltless

Dou. Save that perfidious—

Edr. That much-injur'd woman.

Bir. Unfortunate indeed, but O most innocent!

Edr. In the last solemn article of death,
That truth-compelling state, when even bad men
Fear to speak falsely, Percy clear'd her fame.

Dou. I heard him.—'Twas the guilty fraud of love.
The scarf, the scarf! that proof of mutual passion,
Given but this day to ratify their crimes!

Bir. What means my lord? This day? That fatal scarf
Was given long since, a toy of childish friendship;
Long ere your marriage, ere you knew Elwina.

Raby. 'Tis I am guilty.

Dou. Ha!

Raby. I,—I alone.
Confusion, honour, pride, parental fondness,
Distract my soul,—Percy was not to blame,
He was—the destin'd husband of Elwina!
He lov'd her—was belov'd—and I approv'd.
The tale is long—I chang'd my purpose since,
Forbade their marriage—

Dou. And confirm'd my mis'ry!
Twice did they meet to-day—my wife and Percy.

Raby. I know it.

Dou. Ha! thou knew'st of my dishonour?
Thou wast a witness, an approving witness,
At least a tame one!

Raby. Percy came, 'tis true,
A constant, tender, but a guiltless lover!

Dou. I shall grow mad indeed; a guiltless lover!
Percy, the guiltless lover of my wife?

Raby. He knew not she was married.

Dou. How? is't possible? [cent;

Raby. Douglas, 'tis true; both, both were inno-
He of her marriage, she of his return. [vow'd

Bir. But now, when we believ'd thee dead, she
Never to see thy rival. Instantly,
Not in a state of momentary passion,
But with a martyr's dignity and calmness,
She bade me bring the poison.

Dou. Had'st thou done it,
Despair had been my portion! Fly, good Birtha,
Find out the suffering saint—describe my penitence,
And paint my vast extravagance of fondness,
Tell her I love as never mortal lov'd—
Tell her I know her virtues, and adore them—
Tell her I come, but dare not seek her presence,
Till she pronounce my pardon.

Bir. I obey. [*Exit* BIRTHA.

Raby. My child is innocent! ye choirs of saints,
Catch the bless'd sounds—my child is innocent!

Dou. O I will kneel, and sue for her forgiveness,
And thou shalt help me plead the cause of love,
And thou shalt weep—she cannot sure refuse
A kneeling husband and a weeping father.
Thy venerable cheek is wet already.

Raby. Douglas! it is the dew of grateful joy
My child is innocent! I now would die,
Lest fortune should grow weary of her kindness,
And grudge me this short transport.

Dou. Where, where is she?
My fond impatience brooks not her delay;
Quick, let me find her, hush her anxious soul,
And sooth her troubled spirit into peace.

Enter BIRTHA.

Bir. O horror, horror, horror!

Dou. Ah! what mean'st thou?

Bir. Elwina—

Dou. Speak—

Bir. Her grief wrought up to frenzy,
She has, in her delirium, swallow'd poison!

Raby. Frenzy and poison!

Dou. Both a husband's gift;
But thus I do her justice.

As DOUGLAS *goes to stab himself, enter* ELWINA *distracted, her hair dishevelled,* PERCY'S *scarf in her hand.*

Elw. [*Goes up to* DOUGLAS.] What, blood again? We cannot kill him twice!
Soft, soft—no violence—he's dead already;—
I did it—Yes—I drown'd him with my tears;—
But hide the cruel deed! I'll scratch him out
A shallow grave, and lay the green sod on it;
Ay—and I'll bind the wild briar o'er the turf,
And plant a willow there, a weeping willow—
[*She sits on the ground.*
But look you tell not Douglas, he'll disturb him;
He'll pluck the willow up—and plant a thorn.
He will not let me sit upon his grave,
And sing all day, and weep and pray all night.

Raby. Dost thou not know me?

Elw. Yes—I do remember
You had a harmless lamb.

Raby. I had indeed! [mate,

Elw. From all the flock you chose her out a
In sooth a fair one—you did bid her love it—
But while the shepherd slept the wolf devour'd it.

Raby. My heart will break. This is too much, too much!

Elw. [*Smiling.*] O 'twas a cordial draught—I drank it all.

Raby. What means my child?

Dou. The poison! Oh the poison!
Thou dear wrong'd innocence—

Elw. Off—murderer, off!
Do not defile me with those crimson hands.
[*Shows the scarf.*
This is his winding sheet—I'll wrap him in it—
I wrought it for my love—there—now I've dress'd him.
How brave he looks! my father will forgive him,

He dearly lov'd him once—but that is over.
See where he comes—beware, my gallant Percy,
Ah! come not here, this is the cave of death,
And there 's the dark, dark palace of Revenge!
See the pale king sits on his blood-stain'd throne!
He points to me—I come, I come, I come.

[*She faints, they run to her,* DOUGLAS *takes up his sword and stabs himself.*

Dou. Thus, thus I follow thee.

Edr. Hold thy rash hand!

Dou. It is too late. No remedy but this
Could medicine a disease so desperate.

Raby. Ah, she revives!

Dou. [*Raising himself.*] She lives! bear, bear me to her!
We shall be happy yet.

[*He struggles to get to her, but sinks down.*

It will not be—
O for a last embrace—Alas! I faint—
She lives—Now death is terrible indeed—
Fair spirit, I lov'd thee—O—Elwina! [*Dies.*

Elw. Where have I been? The damps of death are on me.

Raby. Look up, my child! O do not leave me thus!
Pity the anguish of thy aged father.
Hast thou forgot me?

Elw. No—you are my father;
O you are kindly come to close my eyes,
And take the kiss of death from my cold lips!

Raby. Do we meet thus?

Elw. We soon shall meet in peace.
I've but a faint remembrance of the past—
But something tells me—O those painful struggles
Raise me a little—there—

[*She sees the body of* DOUGLAS.

What sight is that?
A sword, and bloody? Ah! and Douglas murder'd!

Edr. Convinc'd too late of your unequall'd virtues,
And wrung with deep compunction for your wrongs,
By his own hand the wretched Douglas fell.

Elw. This adds another, sharper pang to death.
O thou Eternal! take him to thy mercy,
Nor let this sin be on his head, or mine!

Raby. I have undone you all—the crime is mine!
O thou poor injur'd saint, forgive thy father,
He kneels to his wrong'd child.

Elw. Now you are cruel,
Come near, my father, nearer—I would see you,
But mists and darkness cloud my failing sight.
O death! suspend thy rights for one short moment,
Till I have ta'en a father's last embrace—
A father's blessing—Once—and now 'tis over.
Receive me to thy mercy, gracious Heaven!

[*She dies.*

Raby. She's gone! for ever gone! cold, dead and cold.
Am I a father? Fathers love their children——
I murder mine! With impious pride I snatch'd
The bolt of vengeance from the hand of Heaven.
My punishment is great—but oh! 'tis just.
My soul submissive bows. A righteous God
Has made my crime become my chastisement.

[*Exeunt.*

THE FATAL FALSEHOOD:

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.

AS IT WAS ACTED IN 1779, AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN

TO

THE COUNTESS BATHURST,

THIS TRAGEDY IS VERY RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED, AS A
SMALL TRIBUTE TO HER MANY VIRTUES,
AND AS A
GRATEFUL TESTIMONY OF THE FRIENDSHIP WITH WHICH SHE HONOURS
HER MOST OBEDIENT AND MOST
OBLIGED HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR OF THE TRAGEDY —SPOKEN BY MR. HULL.

Our modern poets now can scarcely choose
A subject worthy of the Tragic Muse,
For bards so well have glean'd th' historic field,
That scarce one sheaf th' exhausted ancients yield;
Or if, perchance, they from the golden crop
Some grains, with hand penurious, rarely drop;
Our author these consigns to manly toil,
For classic themes demand a classic soil.
A vagrant she, the desert waste who chose,
Where truth and history no restraints impose.
To her the wilds of fiction open lie,
A flow'ry prospect, and a boundless sky;
Yet hard the task to keep the onward way,
Where the wide scenery lures the foot to stray;
Where no severer limits check the Muse
Than lawless fancy is dispos'd to choose.
Nor does she emulate the loftier strains
Which high *heroic* Tragedy maintains:
Nor conquest she, nor wars, nor triumphs sings,
Nor with rash hand o'erturns the thrones of kings.
No ruin'd empires greet to-night your eyes,
No nations at our bidding fall or rise;
To statesmen deep, to politicians grave,
These themes, congenial to their tastes, we leave,
Of crowns and camps, a kingdom's weal or wo,
How few can judge, because how few can know!
But here you all may boast the censor's art,
Here all are critics who possess a heart.
And of the passions we display to-night,
Each hearer judges like the Stagyrite.
The scenes of private life our author shows
A simple story of domestic woes;
Nor unimportant is the glass we hold,
To show the effect of passions uncontroll'd;
For if to govern *realms* belong to few,
Yet all who live have *passions* to subdue.
Self-conquest is the lesson books should preach,
Self-conquest is the theme the stage should teach.
Vouchsafe to learn this obvious duty here,
The verse though feeble, yet the moral's clear.
O mark to-night the unexampled woes
Which from unbounded self-indulgence flows.
Your candour once endur'd our author's lays;
Endure them now—it will be ample praise

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

Earl Guildford.
Rivers, his son.
Orlando, a young Italian Count.
Bertrand.
Emmelina.
Julia.

Scene.—Earl Guildford's *Castle.*

ACT I.

Scene—*An Apartment in Guildford Castle.*

Enter Bertrand.

Ber. What fools are seriously melancholy villains!
I play a surer game, and screen my heart
With easy looks and undesigning smiles;
And while my plots still spring from sober thought,
My deeds appear the effect of wild caprice,
And I the thoughtless slave of giddy chance.

What but this frankness could have won the promise
Of young Orlando, to confide to me
That secret grief which preys upon his heart?
'Tis shallow, indiscreet hypocrisy,
To seem too good: I am the *careless* Bertrand,
The honest, undesigning, plain, blunt man.
The follies I avow cloak those I hide,
For who will search where nothing seems conceal'd?
'Tis rogues of solid, prudent, grave demeanour,
Excite suspicion; men on whose dark brow
Discretion, with his iron hand, has grav'd
The deep-mark'd characters of thoughtfulness
Here comes my uncle, venerable Guildford,
Whom I could honour, were he not the sire
Of that aspiring boy, who fills the gap
'Twixt me and fortune;—Rivers, how I hate thee!

Enter GUILDFORD.

How fares my noble uncle?

Guild. Honest Bertrand!
I must complain we have so seldom met:
Where do you keep? believe me, we have miss'd you.

Ber. O, my good lord! your pardon—spare me, sir,
For there are follies in a young man's life,
And idle thoughtless hours, which I should blush
To lay before your wise and temperate age.

Guild. Well, be it so—youth has a privilege,
And I should be asham'd could I forget
I have myself been young, and harshly chide
This not ungraceful gayety. Yes, Bertrand,
Prudence becomes moroseness, when it makes
A rigid inquisition of the fault,
Not of the man, perhaps, but of his youth.
Foibles that shame the head on which old Time
Has shower'd his snow, are then more pardonable
And age has many a weakness of its own.

Ber. Your gentleness, my lord, and mild reproof,
Correct the wanderings of misguided youth,
More than rebuke can shame me into virtue

Guild. Saw you my beauteous ward, the lady Julia?

Ber. She pass'd this way, and with her your fair daughter,
Your Emmelina.

Guild. Call them both my daughters;
For scarce is Emmelina more belov'd
Than Julia, the dear child of my adoption.
The hour approaches too, (and, bless it heaven,
With thy benignest, kindliest influence!)
When Julia shall indeed become my daughter,
Shall, in obedience to her father's will,
Crown the impatient vows of my brave son,
And richly pay him for his dangers past.

Ber. Oft have I wondered how the gallant Rivers,
Youthful and ardent, doting to excess,
Could dare the dangers of uncertain war,
Ere marriage had confirmed his claim to Julia.

Guild 'Twas the condition of her father's will,
My brave old fellow-soldier, and my friend!
He wished to see our ancient houses joined
By this, our children's union; but the veteran
So highly valued military prowess,
That he bequeath'd his fortunes and his daughter
To my young Rivers, on these terms alone,
That he should early gain renown in arms;
And if he from the field returned a conqueror,
That sun which saw him come victorious home
Should witness their espousals. Yet he comes not!
The event of war is to the brave uncertain,
Nor can desert in arms ensure success.

Ber. Yet fame speaks loudly of his early valour.

Guild. E'er since the Italian count, the young Orlando,
My Rivers' bosom friend, has been my guest,
The glory of my son is all his theme:
Oh! he recounts his virtues with such joy,
Dwells on his merit with a zeal so warm,
As to his generous heart pays back again
The praises he bestows.

Ber. Orlando's noble.
He's of a tender, brave, and gallant nature,
Of honour most romantic, with such graces
As charm all womankind.

Guild And here comes one,
To whom the story of Orlando's praise
Sounds like sweet music

Ber. What, your charming daughter!
Yes, I suspect she loves the Italian count:
(*Aside.*)
That must not be. Now to observe her closely.

Enter EMMELINA.

Guild. Come hither, Emmelina: we were speaking
Of the young Count Orlando. What think you
Of this accomplished stranger?

Em. (*confused.*) Of Orlando?
Sir, as my father's guest, my brother's friend,
I do esteem the count.

Guild. Nay, he has merit
Might justify thy friendship, if he wanted
The claims thou mention'st; yet I mean to blame him.

Em What has he done? How has he wrong'd my father?
For you are just, and are not angry lightly;
And he is mild, unapt to give offence,
As you to be offended.

Guild. Nay, 'tis not much:
But why does young Orlando shun my presence?
Why lose that cheerful and becoming spirit
Which lately charmed us all? Rivers will chide us,
Should he return and find his friend unhappy.
He is not what he was. What says my child?

Em. My lord, when first my brother's friend arrived—
Be still, my heart— (*Aside.*)

Ber. She dares not use his name
Her brother's friend! (*Aside.*)

Em When first your noble guest
Came from that voyage he kindly undertook
To ease our terrors for my Rivers' safety,
When we believed him dead, he seem'd most happy,
And shar'd the gen'ral joy his presence gave.
Of late he is less gay; my brother's absence,
(Or I mistake) disturbs his friend's repose.
Nor is it strange; one mind informs them both;
Each is the very soul that warms the other,
And both are wretched or are bless'd together.

Ber. Why trembles my fair cousin?

Em. Can I think

That my lov'd brother's life has been in danger,
Nor feel a strong emotion?

Ber. (*ironically.*) Generous pity!
But when that danger has so long been past,
You should forget your terrors.

Em. I shall never;
For when I think that danger sprung from friend-
That Rivers, to preserve another's life, [ship;
Incurr'd this peril, still my wonder rises.

Ber. And why another's life? Why not Orlando's?
Such caution more betrays than honest freedom.

Guild. He's still the same, the gibing, thoughtless Bertrand,
Severe of speech, but innocent of malice.

[*Exit* GUILDFORD: EMMELINA *going.*

Ber. Stay, my fair cousin! still with adverse
Am I beheld? Had I Orlando's form, [eyes
I mean, were I like him *your brother's friend*,
Then would your looks be turned thus coldly on me? [nothing,

Em. But that I know your levity means
And that your heart accords not with your
This would offend me. [tongue,

Ber. Come, confess the truth,
That this gay Florentine, this Tuscan rover,
Has won your easy heart, and given you his:
I know the whole; I'm of his secret council;
He has confess'd—

Em. Ha! what has he confess'd?

Ber. That you are wondrous fair: nay, nothing farther:
How disappointment fires her angry cheek!

(*Aside.*)

Yourself have told the rest, your looks avow it,
Your eyes are honest, nor conceal the secret.

Em. Know, sir, that virtue no concealment needs:
So far from dreading, she solicits notice,
And wishes every secret thought she harbours,
Bare to the eye of men, as 'tis to heaven.

Ber. Yet mark me well: trust not Orlando's truth;
The citron groves have heard his amorous vows
Breath'd out to many a beauteous maid of Florence;
Bred in those softer climes, his roving heart
Ne'er learn'd to think fidelity a virtue;
He laughs at tales of British constancy.
But see, Orlando comes—he seeks you here.
With eyes bent downwards, folded arms, pale
Disorder'd looks, and negligent attire, [cheeks,
And all the careless equipage of love, [blood
He bends this way. Why does the mounting
Thus crimson your fair cheek? He does not see us;
I'll venture to disturb his meditations,
And instantly return. [*Exit* BERTRAND.

Em. No more; but leave me.
He's talkative, but harmless; rude, but honest;
Fuller of mirth than mischief. See, they meet—
This way they come; why am I thus alarm'd?
What is't to me that here Orlando comes?
Oh, for a little portion of that art
Ungenerous men ascribe to our whole sex!
A little artifice were prudence now:
But I have none; my poor unpractis'd heart
Is so unknowing of dissimulation,
So little skill'd to seem the thing it is not,
That if my lips are mute, my looks betray me.

Re-enter BERTRAND *with* ORLANDO.

Ber. Now to alarm her heart, and search out his. (*Aside.*)

Or. We crave your pardon, beauteous Emmelina,
If rudely we intrude upon your thoughts;
Thoughts pure as infants' dreams or angels' wishes,
And gentle as the breast from which they spring.

Em. Be still, my heart, nor let him see thy weakness. (*Aside.*)
We are much bound to thank you, cousin Bertrand,
That since your late return, the Count Orlando
Appears once more among us. Say, my lord,
Why have you shunn'd your friends' society?
Was it well done? My father bade me chide you;
I am not made for chiding, but he bade me;
He says, no more you rise at early dawn
With him to chase the boar: I pleaded for you;
Told him 'twas savage sport.

Or. What was his answer?

Em. He said 'twas sport for heroes, and made heroes;
That hunting was the very school of war,
Taught our brave youth to shine in nobler fields,
Preserv'd them from the rust of dull inaction,
Train'd them for arms, and fitted them for conquest.

Or. O, my fair advocate! scarce can I grieve
To have done wrong, since my offence has
So sweet a pleader. [gain'd

Ber. (*aside.*) So, I like this well;
Full of respect, but cold.

Em. My lord, your pardon,
My father waits my coming; I attend him.

[*Exit.*

Ber. In truth, my lord, you're a right happy man;
Her parting look proclaims that you are blest;
The crimson blushes on her cheek display'd
A gentle strife 'twixt modesty and love:
Discretion strove to dash the rising joy,
But conquering love prevail'd and told the tale.
My lord, you answer not.

Or. What shall I say?
Oh, couldst thou read my heart!

Ber. The hour is come
When my impatient friendship claims that trust
Which I so oft have press'd, and you have promis'd.

Or. I cannot tell thee: 'tis a tale of guilt;
How shall I speak? my resolution sickens;
All virtuous men will shun me, thou wilt scorn
And fly the foul contagion of my crime. [me,

Ber. My bosom is not steel'd with that harsh prudence
Which would reproach thy failings: tell me all;
The proudest heart loves to repose its faults
Upon a breast that has itself a tincture
Of human weakness: I have frailties too,
Frailties that teach me how to pity thine.
What! silent still? Thou lov'st my beauteous
Have I not guess'd? [cousin!

Or. I own that she has charms
Might warm a frozen stoic into love,
Tempt hermits back again to that bad world
They had renounc'd, and make religious men
Forgetful of their holy vows to heav'n:
Yes, Bertrand—come, I'll tell thee all my weak-
Thou hast a tender, sympathizing heart— [ness;
Thou art not rigid to a friend's defects.
That heavenly form I view with eyes as cold
As marble images of lifeless saints;
I see and know the workmanship divine;
My judgment owns her exquisite perfections,
But my rebellious heart denies her claim.
Ber. What do I hear! you love her not!
Or. Oh! Bertrand!
For pity do not hate me; but thou must,
For am I not at variance with myself?
Yet shall I wrong her gentle, trusting nature,
And spurn the heart I labour'd to obtain?
She loves me, Bertrand: oh! too sure she
loves me: [sion;
Loves me with tenderest, truest, chastest pas-
Loves me, oh, barb'rous fate! as I love—Julia.
Ber. Heard I aright? Did you not speak of
Julia?
Julia! the lovely ward of my good uncle?
Julia! the mistress of your friend, of Rivers?
Or. Go on, go on, and urge me with my guilt;
Display my crime in all its native blackness;
Tell me some legend of infernal falsehood,
Tell me some dreadful tale of perjur'd friends,
Of trust betray'd, of innocence deceiv'd:
Place the dire chronicle before my eyes;
Inflame the horror, aggravate the guilt:
That I may see the evils which await me,
Nor pull such fatal mischiefs on my head,
As with my ruin must involve the fate
Of all I love on earth.
Ber. Just as I wish. (*Aside*)
Or. Thou know'st I left my native Italy,
Directed hither by the noble Rivers,
To ease his father's fears, who thought he fell
In that engagement where we both were
wounded.
His was a glorious wound, gain'd in the cause
Of gen'rous friendship: for a hostile spear,
Aim'd at my breast, Rivers in his receiv'd,
Sav'd my devoted life, and won my soul.
Ber. So far I knew; but what of Emmelina?
Or. Whether her gentle beauties first allur'd
me,
Or whether peaceful scenes and rural shades,
Or leisure, or the want of other objects,
Or solitude, apt to engender love,
Engag'd my soul, I know not; but I lov'd her.
We were together always, till the habit
Grew into something like necessity.
When Emmelina left me I was sad,
Nor knew a joy till Emmelina came;
Her soft society amus'd my mind,
Fill'd up my vacant heart, and touch'd my soul:
'Twas gratitude, 'twas friendship, 'twas esteem,
'Twas reason, 'twas persuasion,—nay, 'twas
Ber. But where was Julia? [love.
Or. Oh! too soon she came;
For when I saw that wondrous form of beauty,
I stood entranced, like some astronomer,
Who, as he views the bright expanse of heaven,
Finds a new star. I gaz'd, and was undone;
Gaz'd, and forgot the tender Emmelina,
Gaz'd, and forgot the gen'rous, trusting Rivers,
Forgot my faith, my friendship, and my honour.
Ber. Does Julia know your love?
Or. Forbid it, heaven!
What! think'st thou I am so far gone in guilt
As boldly to avow it? Bertrand, no;
For all the kingdoms of the spacious earth,
I would not wrong my friend, or damn my hon-
our. [self.
Ber. Trust me, you think too hardly of your-
Or. Think I have lodg'd a secret in thy breast
On which my peace, my fame, my all depends;
Long have I struggled with the fatal truth,
And scarce have dar'd to breathe it to myself:
For, oh! too surely the first downward step,
The treacherous path that leads to guilty deeds,
Is to make sin familiar to the thoughts. [*Exit.*
Ber. Am I awake? No: 'tis delusion all!
My wildest wishes never soar'd to this;
Fortune anticipates my plot: he loves her.
Loves just whom I would have him love—loves
Julia!
Orlando, yes, I'll play thee at my will;
Poor puppet! thou hast trusted to my hand
The strings by which I'll move thee to thy ruin,
And make thee too the instrument of vengeance,
Of glorious vengeance on the man I hate. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

Enter JULIA *and* EMMELINA.

Julia. How many cares perplex the maid who
loves!
Cares which the vacant heart can never know.
You fondly tremble for a brother's life;
Orlando mourns the absence of a friend;
Guildford is anxious for a son's renown;
In my poor heart your various terrors meet,
With added fears and fonder apprehensions:
They all unite in me, I feel for all,
His life, his fame, his absence, and his love;
For he may live to see his native home,
And he may live to bless a sister's hopes,
May live to gratify impatient friendship,
May live to crown a father's house with honour,
May live to glory, yet be dead to love.
Em. Forbear these fears; they wound my
brother's honour:
Julia! a brave man must be ever faithful;
Cowards alone dare venture to be false;
Cowards alone dare injure trusting virtue,
And with bold perjuries affront high heaven.
Julia. I know his faith, and venerate his vir-
I know his heart is tender as 'tis brave; [tues;
That all his father's worth, his sister's softness,
Meet in his generous breast—and yet I fear—
Whoever lov'd like me, and did not fear?

Enter GUILDFORD.

Guild. Where are my friends, my daughter?
where is Julia?
How shall I speak the fulness of my heart?
My son, my Rivers, will this day return.
Em. My dearest brother!
Julia. Ha! my Rivers comes!
Propitious heaven!

Em. And yet my Julia trembles.
Julia. Have I not cause? my Rivers comes!
I dread to ask, and yet I die to hear. [but how?
My lord—you know the terms—
Guild. He comes a conqueror!
He comes as Guildford's son should ever come!
The battle's o'er, the English arms successful,
And Rivers, like an English warrior, hastes
To lay his laurels at the feet of beauty. [*Exit.*
Julia. My joy oppresses me!
Em. And see, Orlando!
How will the welcome news transport his soul,
And raise his drooping heart! with caution tell him,
Lest the o'erwhelming rapture be too much
For his dejected mind.

Enter ORLANDO *and* BERTRAND.

Julia. My lord Orlando,
Wherefore that troubled air? no more you dwell
On your once darling theme; you speak no more
The praises of your Rivers; is he chang'd?
Is he not still the gallant friend you lov'd,
As virtuous and as valiant?
Or. Still the same;
He must be ever virtuous, ever valiant.
Em. If Rivers is the same, then must I think
Orlando greatly chang'd; you speak not of him,
Nor long for his return, as you were wont.
How did you use to spend the livelong day,
In telling some new wonders of your friend,
Till night broke in upon th' unfinish'd tale;
And when 'twas o'er, you would begin again,
And we again would listen with delight,
With fresh delight, as if we had not heard it!
Does Rivers less deserve, or you less love?
Or. Have I not lov'd him? was my friendship
When any praised his glories in the field? [cold
My raptur'd heart has bounded at the tale!
Methought I grew illustrious from his glory,
And rich from his renown; to hear him prais'd,
More proud than if I had achiev'd his deeds,
And reap'd myself the harvest of his fame.
How have I trembled for a life so dear,
When his too ardent soul, despising caution,
Has plung'd him in the foremost ranks of war,
As if in love with danger.
Julia. Valiant Rivers!
How does thy greatness justify my love!
Ber. He's distant far, so I may safely praise him. (*Aside.*)
I claim some merit in my love of Rivers,
Since I admire the virtues that eclipse me;
With pleasure I survey those dazzling heights
My gay, inactive temper cannot reach.
Em. Spoke like my honest cousin. Then, Orlando,
Since such the love you bear your noble friend,
How will your heart sustain the mighty joy
The news I tell will give you? Yes, Orlando,
Restrain the transports of your grateful friendship,
And hear with moderation, hear me tell you
That Rivers will return—
Or. How? when?
Em. This day.
Or. Impossible!
Ber. Then all my schemes are air. (*Aside.*)
Em. To-day I shall embrace my valiant brother! [her right!
Julia. You droop, my lord: did you not hear
She told you that your Rivers would return,
Would come to crown your friendship and our hopes. [friend?
Or. He is most welcome! Is he not my
You say my Rivers comes. Thy arm, good Bertrand.
Ber. Joy to us all; joy to the Count Orlando!
Weak man, take care. (*Aside to* ORLANDO.)
Em. My lord! you are not well.
Ber. Surprise and joy oppress him; I myself
Partake his transports. Rouse, my lord, for
Em. How is it with you now? [shame.
Or. Quite well—'tis past.
Ber. The wonder's past, and naught but joy remains.

Enter GUILDFORD *and* RIVERS.

Guild. He's come! he's here! I have embrac'd my warrior;
Now take me, heav'n, I have liv'd long enough.
Julia. My lord, my Rivers!
Riv. 'Tis my Julia's self!
My life!
Julia. My hero! Do I then behold thee?
Riv. Oh, my full heart! expect not words,
Em. Rivers! [my Julia!
Riv. My sister! what an hour is this!
My own Orlando, too!
Or. My noble friend!
Riv. This is such prodigality of bliss,
I scarce can think it real. Honest Bertrand,
Your hand; yours, my Orlando, yours, my
And as a hand, I have a heart for all; [father;
Love has enlarg'd it; from excess of love
I am become more capable of friendship.
My dearest Julia!
Guild She is thine, my son, [her,
Thou hast deserv'd her nobly; thou hast won
Fulfill'd the terms—
Riv. Therefore I dare not ask her;
I would not claim my Julia as a debt,
But take her as a gift; and, oh! I swear
It is the dearest, richest, choicest gift,
The bounty of indulgent heaven could grant.
(GUILDFORD *joins their hands.*)
Julia. Spare me, my lord.—As yet I scarce have seen you.
Confusion stops my tongue—yet I will own,
If there be truth or faith in woman's vows,
Then you have still been present to this heart,
And not a thought has wander'd from its duty.
[*Exeunt* JULIA *and* EMMELINA.
Riv (*looking after Julia.*) Oh, generous Julia!
Or. (*aside to Ber.*) Mark how much she loves him! [fond sex have always ready.
Ber. (*aside to Or.*) Mere words, which the
Riv. Forgive me, good Orlando, best of friends!
How my soul joys to meet thee on this shore!
Thus to embrace thee in my much-lov'd England! [of heroes,
Guild. England! the land of worth, the soil
Where great Elizabeth the sceptre sways,
O'er a free, glorious, rich, and happy people!
Philosophy, not cloister'd up in schools,
The speculative dream of idle monks,

Attir'd in attic robe, here roams at large;
Wisdom is wealth, and science is renown.
Here sacred laws protect the meanest subject,
The bread that toil procures fair freedom sweetens,
And every peasant eats his homely meal
Content and free, lord of his small domain

Riv. Past are those Gothic days, and, thanks to heav'n,
They are for ever past, when English subjects
Were born the vassals of some tyrant lord!
When free-soul'd men were basely handed down
To the next heir, transmitted with their lands,
The shameful legacy, from sire to son!

Guild. But while thy generous soul, my noble boy,
Justly abhors oppression, yet revere
The plain stern virtues of our rough forefathers.
O, never may the gallant sons of England
Lose their plain, manly, native character,
Forego the glorious charter nature gave them,
Beyond what kings can give, or laws bestow;
Their candour, courage, constancy, and truth!

[*Exeunt* GUILDFORD *and* RIVERS.

Or. Stay, Bertrand, stay—Oh, pity my distraction!
This heart was never made to hide its feelings;
I had near betray'd myself.

Ber. I trembled for you;
Remember that the eye of love is piercing,
And Emmelina mark'd you.

Or. 'Tis too much:
My artless nature cannot bear disguise
Think what I felt when unsuspecting Rivers
Press'd me with gen'rous rapture to his bosom,
Profess'd an honest joy, and call'd me friend!
I felt myself a traitor. yet I swear,
Yes, by that Power who sees the thoughts of men,
I swear, I love the gallant Rivers more
Than light or life! I love, but yet I fear him.
I shrunk before the lustre of his virtue—
I felt as I had wrong'd him—felt abash'd
I cannot bear this conflict in my soul,
And therefore have resolv'd—

Ber. On what?

Or To fly.

Ber. To fly from Julia?

Or Yes, to fly from all,
From every thing I love; to fly from Rivers,
From Emmelina, from myself, from thee.
From Julia? no—that were impossible,
For I shall bear her image in my soul;
It is a part of me, the dearest part;
So closely interwoven with my being,
That I can never lose the dear remembrance,
Till I am robb'd of life and her together.

Ber. 'Tis cowardice to fly.

Or. 'Tis death to stay.

Ber. Where would you go? How lost in thought he stands! (*Aside*)
A vulgar villain now would use persuasion,
And by his very earnestness betray
The thing he meant to hide; I'll coolly wait,
Till the occasion shows me how to act,
Then turn it to my purpose. Ho! Orlando!
Where would you go?

Or. To solitude, to hopeless banishment!
Yes, I will shroud my youth in those dark cells
Where disappointment steals devotion's name,
To cheat the wretched votary into ruin;
There will I live in love with misery;
Ne'er shall the sight of mirth profane my grief,
The sound of joy shall never charm my ear,
Nor music reach it, save when the slow bell
Wakes the dull brotherhood to lifeless prayer
Then, when the slow-retreating world recedes,
When warm desires are cold, and passion dead,
And all things but my Julia are forgotten,
One thought of her shall fire my languid soul,
Chase the faint orison, and feed despair.

Ber. What! with monastic, lazy drones retire,
And chant cold hymns with holy hypocrites?
First perish all the sex! forbid it, manhood!
Where is your nobler self? for shame, Orlando,
Renounce this superstitious, whining weakness,
Or I shall blush to think I call'd you friend.

Or. What can I do?

Ber (*after a pause.*) Beg she'll defer the marriage
But for one single day; do this, and leave
The rest to me. she shall be thine.

Or. How sayst thou?
What, wrong her virtue?

Ber. Still this cant of virtue!
This pomp of words, this phrase without a meaning!
I grant that honour's something, manly honour;
I'd fight, I'd burn, I'd bleed, I'd die for honour,
But what's this virtue!

Or Ask you what it is?
Why, 'tis what libertines themselves adore;
'Tis that which wakens love and kindles rapture,
Beyond the rosy lip or starry eye.
Virtue! 'tis that which gives a secret force
To common charms; but to true loveliness
Lends colouring celestial. Such its power,
That she who ministers to guilty pleasures,
Assumes its semblance when she most would please,
Virtue! 'tis that ethereal energy
Which gives to body spirit, soul to beauty [*Exit.*

Ber. Curse on his principles! Yet I shall shake them;
Yes, I will bend his spirit to my will,
Now, while 'tis warm with passion, and will take
Whatever mould my forming hand will give it.
'Tis worthy of my genius! Then I love
This Emmelina. true, she loves not me,
But, should young Rivers die, his father's lands
Would then be mine—is Rivers, then, immortal!
Come—Guildford's lands, and his proud daughter's hand,
Are worth some thought. Aid me, ye spurs to genius!
Love, mischief, poverty, revenge, and envy!

[*Exit* BERTRAND.

Enter EMMELINA *and* RIVERS, *talking*.

Em Yet do not blame Orlando, good my brother;
He's still the same, that brave frank heart you lov'd;
Only his temper's chang'd, he is grown sad;
But that's no fault, I only am to blame;
Fond, foolish heart, to give itself away
To one who gave me nothing in return!

Riv. How's this? my father said Orlando lov'd thee.

Em. Indeed I thought so; he was kinder once;
Nay, still he loves, or my poor heart deceives me.

Riv. If he has wrong'd thee! yet I know he could not;

His gallant soul is all made up of virtues,
And I would rather doubt myself than him.
Yet tell me all the story of your loves,
And let a brother's fondness sooth thy cares.

Em. When to this castle first Orlando came,
A welcome guest to all, to me most welcome;
Yes, spite of maiden shame and burning blushes,
Let me confess he was most welcome to me!
At first my foolish heart so much deceiv'd me,
I thought I lov'd him for my brother's sake;
But when I closely search'd this bosom traitor,
I found, alas! I lov'd him for his own

Riv. Blush not to own it; 'twas a well-plac'd flame!
I glory in the merit of my friend,
And love my sister more for loving him

Em He talk'd of you; I listen'd with delight,
And fancied 'twas the subject only charm'd me;
But when Orlando chose another theme,
Forgive me, Rivers, but I listen'd still
With undiminish'd joy—he talk'd of love,
Nor was that theme less grateful than the former.
I seem'd the very idol of his soul;
Rivers, he said, would thank me for the friendship
I bore to his Orlando; I believ'd him
Julia was absent then—but what of Julia?

Riv Ay, what of her indeed? why nam'd you Julia?
You could not surely think? no, that were wild
Why did you mention Julia?

Em (*confusedly*) Nay, 'twas nothing,
'Twas accident, nor had my words a meaning,
If I did name her—'twas to note the time—
To mark the period of Orlando's coldness
The circumstance was casual, and but meant
To date the change, it aim'd at nothing farther

Riv (*agitated*) 'Tis very like—no more—I'm satisfied—
You talk as I had doubts. what doubts have I?
Why do you labour to destroy suspicions
Which never had a birth? Is she not mine?
Mine by the fondest ties of dear affection?—
But *did* Orlando change at her return?
Did he grow cold? It could not be for that;
You may mistake And yet you said 'twas *then*:
Was it *precisely* then? I only ask
For the fond love I bear my dearest sister

Em 'Twas as I said

Riv. (*recovering himself*) He loves thee, Emmelina.
These starts of passion, this unquiet temper,
Betray how much he loves thee yes, my sister,
He fears to lose thee, fears his father's will
May dash his rising hopes, nor give thee to him

Em Oh, flatterer! thus to sooth my easy nature
With tales of possible, unlikely bliss!
Because it *may* be true, my credulous heart
Whispers it is, and fondly loves to cherish
The feeble glimmering of a sickly hope.

Riv. This precious moment, worth a tedious age
Of vulgar time, I've stol'n from love and Julia;
She waits my coming, and a longer stay
Were treason to her beauty and my love.
Doubts vanish, fears recede, and fondness triumphs. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE—*A Garden.*

Em. Why do my feet unbidden seek this grove?
Why do I trace his steps? I thought him here
This is his hour of walking, and these shades
His daily haunt: oft have they heard his vows:
Ah! fatal vows, which stole my peace away!
But now he shuns my presence: yet who knows,
He may not be ungrateful, but unhappy!
Yes, he will come to clear his past offences,
With such prevailing eloquence will plead,
So mourn his former faults, so blame his coldness,
And by ten thousand graceful ways repair them,
That I shall think I never was offended.
He comes, and every doubt's at once dispell'd:
'Twas fancy all; he never meant to wrong me.

Enter ORLANDO.

Or. Why at this hour of universal joy,
When every heart beats high with grateful rapture,
And pleasure dances her enchanting round;
O, tell me why, at this auspicious hour,
You quit the joyful circle of your friends:
Rob social pleasure of its sweetest charm,
And leave a void e'en in the happiest hearts,
An aching void which only you can fill?
Why do you seek these unfrequented shades?
Why court these gloomy haunts, unfit for beauty,
But made for meditation and misfortune?

Em I might retort the charge, my lord Orlando?
I *might* inquire how the lov'd friend of Rivers,
Whom he has held deep-rooted in his heart
Beyond a brother's dearness, sav'd his life,
And cherish'd it when sav'd beyond his own;—
I *might* inquire, why, when this Rivers comes,
After long tedious months of expectation,
Alive, victorious, and as firm in friendship
As fondness could have wish'd, or fancy feign'd·
I *might* inquire why thus Orlando shuns him—
Why thus he courts this melancholy gloom,
As if he were at variance with delight,
And scorn'd to mingle in the general joy?

Or. Oh, my fair monitress! I have deserv'd
Your gentle censure. Henceforth I'll be gay.

Em. Julia complains too of you.

Or Ah! does Julia?
If Julia chides me, I have err'd indeed:
For harshness is a stranger to her nature.
But why does she complain? O, tell me wherefore?
That I may soon repair the unwilling crime,
And prove my heart at least ne'er meant to wrong her.

Em Why so alarm'd?

Or. Alarm'd!

Em Indeed, you seem'd so.

Or Sure you mistake. Alarm'd! oh no, I was not;
There was no cause—I could not be alarm'd
Upon so slight a ground. Something you said,
But what, I know not, of your friend.

Em. Of Julia?

Or. That Julia was displeas'd—was it not so?
'Twas that, or something like it.

Em. She complains
That you avoid her

Or. How! that I avoid her!
Did Julia say so? ah! you had forgot—
It could not be

Em. Why are you terrified?

Or. No.

Not terrified—I am not—but were those [ing;
Her very words? you might mistake her mean-
Did Julia say Orlando shunn'd her presence?
Oh! did she, could she say so?

Em. If she did,
Why this disorder? there's no cause.

Or. No cause?
Oh! there's a cause of dearer worth than empire!
Quick let me fly, and find the fair upbraider;
Tell her she wrongs me, tell her I would die
Rather than meet her anger (EMMELINA *faints.*)
Ah, she faints!
What have I said? curse my imprudent tongue!
Look up, sweet innocence! my Emmelina—
My gentle friend, awake! look up, fair creature!
'Tis your Orlando calls

Em. Orlando's voice!
Methought he talked of love—nay, do not mock
My heart is but a weak, a very weak one! [me;
I am not well—perhaps I've been to blame.
Spare my distress; the error has been mine.
[*Exit* EMMELINA.

Or. So then, all's over; I've betrayed my secret,
And stuck a poison'd dagger to her heart,
Her innocent heart Why, what a wretch am I!
Ruin approaches—shall I tamely meet it,
And dally with destruction till it blast me?
No, I will fly thee, Julia, fly for ever
Ah, fly! what then becomes of Emmelina?
Shall I abandon *her*? it must be so;
Better escape with this poor wreck of honour
Than hazard all by staying. Rivers here?

Enter RIVERS

Riv. The same. My other self! my own Orlando!
I came to seek thee; 'twas in thy kind bosom,
My suffering soul reposed its secret cares,
When doubts and difficulties stood before me:
And now, now when my prosperous fortune shines,
And gilds the smiling hour with her bright beams,
Shall I become a niggard of my bliss,
Defraud thee of thy portion of my joys, [them?
And rob thee of thy well-earn'd claim to share

Or. That I have ever lov'd thee, witness Heaven! [sing
That I have thought thy friendship the best bles-
That mark'd the fortune of my happier days,
I here attest the sovereign Judge of hearts!
Then think, O think what anguish I endure,
When I declare, in bitterness of spirit,
That we must part——

Riv What does Orlando mean?

Or. That I must leave thee, Rivers; must
Thy lov'd society. [renounce

Riv Thou hast been injur'd;
Thy merit has been slighted. sure, my father,
Who knew how dear I held thee, would not wrong thee.

Or. He is all goodness; no—there is a cause—
Seek not to know it.

Riv. Now, by holy friendship!
I swear thou shalt not leave me; what, just now,
When I have safely pass'd so many perils,
Escap'd so many deaths, return'd once more
To the kind arms of long desiring friendship,
Just now, when I expected such a welcome,
As happy souls in paradise bestow
Upon a new inhabitant, who comes
To taste their blessedness, you coldly tell me
You will depart: it must not be, Orlando.

Or. It must, it must.

Riv. Ah, must! then tell me wherefore?

Or. I would not dim thy dawn of happiness,
Nor shade the brighter beams of thy good fortune
With the dark sullen cloud that hangs o'er mine.

Riv. Is this the heart of him I call'd my friend,
Full of the graceful weakness of affection?
How have I known it bend at my request!
How lose the power of obstinate resistance,
Because his friend entreated! This Orlando!
How is he chang'd!

Or Alas, how chang'd, indeed!
How dead to every relish of delight!
How chang'd in all but in his love for thee!
Yet think not that my nature is grown harder,
That I have lost that ductile, yielding heart;
Rivers, I have not—oh! 'tis still too soft;
E'en now it melts, it bleeds in tenderness—
Farewell! I dare not trust myself—farewell!

Riv Then thou resolv'st to go?

Or. This very day!

Riv What do I hear? To-day! It must not
This is the day that makes my Julia mine [be.

Or. Wed her to-day?

Riv This day unites me to her,
Then stay at least till thou behold'st her mine.

Or. Impossible! another day were ruin

Riv Then let me fly to Julia, and conjure her
To bless me with her hand this hour—this

Or Oh! no, no, no! [moment,

Riv. I will: in such a cause
Surely she will forego the rigid forms
Of cold decorum; then, my best Orlando!
I shall receive my Julia from thy hand;
The blessing will be doubled! I shall owe
The precious gift of love to sacred friendship!

Or. Canst thou bear this, my heart?

Riv Then, my Orlando,
Since thy unkind reserve denies my heart
Its partnership in this thy hoard of sorrows,
I will not press to know it; thou shalt go
Soon as the holy priest has made us one:
For, oh! 'twill sooth thee in the hour of parting,
To know I'm in possession of my love,
To think I'm blest with Julia, to reflect
Thou gav'st her to my arms, my bride! my wife!

Or. Ah! my brain turns!

Riv. 'Tis as I thought; I'll try him.
(*Aside.*)
Now answer me, Orlando, and with truth;
Hide nothing from thy friend—dost thou not love? [heart.

Or Ha! how! I am betray'd! he reads my

Riv. Hast thou, with all that tenderness of soul,
From love's infection kept thy yielding heart?
Say, couldst thou bask in all the blaze of beauty,
And never feel its warmth?—Impossible!
Oh! I shall probe thy soul, till thou confess
The conqu'ring fair one's name—but why con-
Come, come, I know full well— [fess?

Or. Ha! dost thou know?
And knowing, dost thou suffer me to live?
And dost thou know my guilt, and call me friend?
He mocks but to destroy me!

Riv. Come, no more:
Love is a proud, an arbitrary god,
And will not choose as rigid fathers bid;
I know that thine has destin'd for thy bride
A Tuscan maid; but hearts disdain all force.

Or. How's this? what, dost thou justify my passion?

Riv. Applaud it—glory in it—will assist it.
She is so fair, so worthy to be lov'd,
That I should be thy rival, were not she
My sister.

Or. How!

Riv. She is another Julia.

Or. I stood upon a fearful precipice—
I'm giddy still—oh, yes! I understand thee—
Thy beauteous sister! what a wretch I've been!
Oh, Rivers! too much softness has undone me.
Yet I will never wrong the maid I love,
Nor injure thee; first let Orlando perish!

Riv. Be more explicit.

Or For the present spare me
Think not too hardly of me, noble Rivers!
I am a man, and full of human frailties;
But hate like hell the crime which tempts me on
When I am ready to depart I'll see thee,
Clear all my long accounts of love and honour,
Remove thy doubts, embrace thee, and expire

[*Exit* ORLANDO

Manet RIVERS

Riv It must be so—to what excess he loves her!
Yet wherefore not demand her? for his birth
May claim alliance with the proudest fortune
Sure there's some hidden cause—perhaps—ah, no!
Turn from that thought, my soul! 'twas vile [suspicion;
And I could hate the heart which but conceiv'd it
'Tis true their faiths are different—then his father,
Austere and rigid, dooms him to another
That must not be—these bars shall be remov'd;
I'll serve him with my life, nor taste of bliss
Till I have sought to bless the friend I love.

[*Exit*

Re-enter ORLANDO

Or Wed her to-day? wed her perhaps this hour?
Hasten the rites for *me?* *I* give her to him!
I stand a tame spectator of their bliss?
I live a patient witness of their joy? [blood.
First let this dagger drink my heart's warm
(*Takes a dagger from his bosom, then sees* JULIA)
The sorceress comes! oh, there's a charm about her [live.
Which holds my hand, and makes me wish to
I shudder at her sight! open, thou earth,
And save me from the peril of her charms!

(*Puts up the dagger.*)

Enter JULIA.

Julia. Methought I heard the cry of one in pain;
From hence it came; ah, me! my lord Orlando!
What means that sigh? that agonizing voice?
Those groans which rend your heart? those frantic looks?
Indeed I'm terrified. What would you do?

Or. (*furiously*) Die!

Julia. Talk you of death? renounce the fatal [thought;
Live for my sake, Orlando.

Or. For thy sake?
That were indeed a cause to live for ages,
Would nature but extend the narrow limits
Of human life so far.

Julia And for the sake
Of Rivers; live for both, he sends me here
To beg you would delay your purpos'd parting;
His happiness, he swears, if you are absent,
Will be but half complete.

Or. Is it to-night?
This marriage, Julia, did you say to-night?

Julia. It is, and yet you leave us.

Or No.—I'll stay.
Since you command, stay and expire before you.

Julia. What mean you?

Or. That I'll perish at the feet
Of—Rivers.

Julia. Tell your sorrows to my lord;
Upon his faithful breast repose the weight
That presses you to earth,

Or. Tell *him?* Tell Rivers?
Is he not yours? Does not the priest now wait
To make you one? Then do not mock me thus:
What leisure can a happy bridegroom find
To think upon so lost a wretch as I am?
You hate me, Julia.

Julia. Hate you! how you wrong me!
Live to partake our joy

Or Hope you for joy?

Julia. Have I not cause? Am I not lov'd by Rivers?
Rivers, the best, the bravest of his sex!
Whose valour fabled heroes ne'er surpass'd,
Whose virtues teach the young and charm the [old;
Whose graces are the wonder of our sex,
And envy of his own

Or. Enough! enough!
O spare this prodigality of praise.
But, Julia, if you would not here behold me
Stretch'd at your feet a lifeless bloody corpse,
Promise what I shall now request.

Julia What is it?

Or. That till to-morrow's sun, I ask no longer,
You will defer this marriage

Julia Ah! defer it!
Impossible; what would my Rivers think?

Or No matter what; 'tis for his sake I ask it;
His peace, his happiness, perhaps his life
Depends on what I ask.

Julia. His life! the life of Rivers!
Some dreadful thought seems lab'ring in your [breast;
Explain this horrid mystery.

Or. I dare not.
If you comply, before to-morrow's dawn,
All will be well, the danger past: then finish
These—happy nuptials: but if you refuse,
Tremble for him you love; the altar's self
Will be no safeguard from a madman's rage.

Julia. What rage? what madman? what remorseless villain?

Orlando—will not you protect your friend?
Think how he loves you—he would die for you—
Then save him, on my knees I beg you save him— (*Kneels*)
Oh! guard my Rivers from this bloody foe.

Or. Dearer than life I love him—ask no more,
But promise in the awful face of heaven,
To do what I request—and promise further,
Not to disclose the cause.

Julia. Oh, save him! save him!

Or. 'Tis to preserve him that I ask it: promise,
Or see me fall before you.

(*He draws the dagger, she still kneeling.*)

Julia. I do promise.
Hide, hide that deadly weapon—I do promise. (*Rises.*)
How wild you look! you tremble more than I.
I'll call my Rivers hither.

Or. Not for worlds.
If you have mercy in your nature, Julia,
Retire. Oh, leave me quickly to myself;
Do not expose me to the strong temptation
Which now assaults me.—Yet you are not gone.

Julia. Be more composed; I leave you with regret. [its seat!
(*As she goes out.*) His noble mind is shaken from
What may these transports mean? heav'n guard my Rivers!

As Julia *goes out, enter* Bertrand, *he speaks behind.*

Ber. Why, this is well; this has a face; she weeps,
He seems disorder'd.—Now, to learn the cause,
And then make use of what I hear by chance,
As of a thing I knew. (*He listens.*)

Or. (*after a pause.*) And is she gone?
Her parting words shot fire into my soul;
Did she not say she left me with regret?
Her look was tender, and the starting tear
Fill'd her bright eye: she left me with regret—
She own'd it too.

Ber. 'Twill do.
(*Comes forward.*) What have you done?
The charming Julia is dissolv'd in wo;
Her radiant eyes are quench'd in floods of tears;
For you they fall; her blushes have confess'd it.

Or. For me? what sayst thou? Julia weep for me!
Yet she is gentle, and she would have wept
For thee; for any who but seem'd unhappy.

Ber. Ungrateful!

Or. How?

Ber. Not by her tears, I judge,
But by her words, not meant for me to hear.

Or. What did she say? What didst thou hear, good Bertrand!
Speak—I'm on fire.

Ber. It is not safe to tell you.
Farewell! I would not injure Rivers.

Or. Stay,
Or tell me all, or I renounce thy friendship.

Ber. That threat unlocks my tongue; I must not lose thee.
Sweet Julia wept, clasp'd her fair hands, and [cried,
Why was I left a legacy to Rivers,
Robb'd of the power of choice? Seeing me she started,
Would have recall'd her words, blush'd, and retir'd. [my ruin.

Or. No more; thou shalt not tempt me to
Deny what thou hast said, deny it quickly,
Ere I am quite undone; for, oh! I feel
Retreating virtue touches its last post,
And my lost soul now verges on destruction.
Bertrand! she promis'd to defer the marriage.

Ber. Then my point's gain'd; that will make Rivers jealous. (*Aside.*)
She loves you.

Or. No; and even if she did
I have no hope.

Ber. You are too scrupulous.
Be bold, and be successful; sure of this,
There is no crime a woman sooner pardons
Than that of which her beauty is the cause.

Or. Shall I defraud my friend? he bled to gain her!
What! rob the dear preserver of my life
Of all that makes the happiness of his?
And yet her beauty might excuse a falsehood,
Nay, almost sanctify a perjury.
Perdition's in that thought—'twas born in hell.
My soul is up in arms, my reason's lost,
And love, and rage, and jealousy, and honour,
Pull my divided heart, and tear my soul [*Exit.*

Manet Bertrand.

Ber. Rave on, and beat thy wings; poor bird! thou'rt lim'd,
And vain will be thy struggles to get loose.
How much your very honest men lack *prudence!*
Though all the nobler virtues fill one scale,
Yet place but indiscretion in the other,
In worldly business, and the ways of men,
That single folly weighs the balance down,
While all the ascending virtues kick the beam.
Here's this Orlando now, of rarest parts,
Honest, heroic, generous, frank, and kind,
As inexperience of the world can make him;
Yet shall this single weakness, this *imprudence,*
Pull down unheard-of plagues upon his head,
And snare his heedless soul beyond redemption;
While dull, unfeeling hearts, and frozen spirits,
Sordidly safe, secure because untempted,
Look up, and wonder at the generous crime
They wanted wit to frame, and souls to dare.

ACT IV.

Scene—*An Apartment.*

Em. How many ways there are of being wretched!
The avenues to happiness how few!
When will this busy, fluttering heart be still?
When will it cease to feel and beat no more?
E'en now it shudders with a dire presage
Of something terrible it fears to know.
Ent'ring, I saw my venerable father
In earnest conference with the Count Orlando;
Shame and confusion fill'd Orlando's eye,
While stern resentment fir'd my father's cheek.
And look, he comes, with terror on his brow!
But, O! he sees me, sees his child; and now
The terror of his look is lost in love,
In fond, paternal love.

Enter GUILDFORD.

Guild. Come to my arms,
And there conceal that penetrating eye,
Lest it should read what I would hide for ever,
Would hide from all, but most would hide from thee—
Thy father's grief, his shame, his rage, his tears
Em. Tears! heaven and earth! see if he does not weep!
Guild. He who has drawn this sorrow from [my eyes
Shall pay me back again in tears of blood
'Tis for thy sake I weep
Em Ah, weep for me!
Hear, heaven, and judge; hear, heaven, and If any crime of mine— [punish me!
Guild. Thou art all innocence;
Just what a parent's fondest wish would frame;
No fault of thine e'er stain'd thy father's cheek;
For if I blush'd, it was to hear thy virtues,
And think that thou wast mine and if I wept,
It was from joy and gratitude to heaven,
That made me father of a child like thee.
Orlando—
Em What of him?
Guild. I cannot tell thee;
An honest shame, a virtuous pride forbids
Em Oh, speak! [father?
Guild Canst thou not guess, and spare thy
Em 'Tis possible I can—and yet I will not·
Tell me the worst while I have sense to hear
Thou wilt not speak—nay, never turn away,
Dost thou not know that fear is worse than grief?
There may be bounds to grief, fear knows no bounds;
In grief we know the worst of what we feel,
But who can tell the end of what we fear?
Grief mourns some sorrow palpable and known,
But fear runs wild with horrible conjecture.
Guild Then hear the worst, and arm thy soul to bear it
My child!—he has—Orlando has refus'd thee
Em (*after a long pause*) 'Tis well—'tis very well—'tis as it should be [wo,
Guild Oh, there's an eloquence in that mute
Which mocks all language Speak, relieve thy heart,
Thy bursting heart; thy father cannot bear it
Am I a man? no more of this, fond eyes!
I am grown weaker than a chidden infant,
While not a sigh escapes to tell thy pain
Em See, I am calm; I do not shed a tear;
The warrior weeps, the woman is a hero!
Guild (*embraces her*) My glorious child! now thou art mine indeed!
Forgive me if I thought thee fond and weak.
I have a Roman matron for my daughter,
And not a feeble girl. And yet I fear,
For, oh! I know thy tenderness of soul,
I fear this silent anguish but portends
Some dread convulsion soon to burst in horrors.
Em. I will not shame thy blood; and yet, my father,
Methinks thy daughter should not be refus'd!
Refused! It is a harsh, ungrateful sound;
Thou shouldst have found a softer term of scorn.
And have I then been held so cheap? Refus'd?
Been treated like the light ones of my sex,
Held up to sale? been offer'd, and refused?
Guild. Long have I known thy love, I thought it mutual;
I met him—talk'd of marriage—
Em Ah! no more:
I am rejected;—does not that suffice?
Excuse my pride the mortifying tale;
Spare me particulars of how and when,
And do not parcel out thy daughter's shame.
No flowers of rhetoric can change the fact,
No arts of speech can varnish o'er my shame;
Orlando has refus'd me.
Guild. Villain! villain!
He shall repent this outrage
Em Think no more on't:
I'll teach thee how to bear it; I'll grow proud,
As gentle spirits still are apt to do
When cruel slight or killing scorn assails them
Come, virgin dignity, come, female pride,
Come, wounded modesty, come, slighted love,
Come, conscious worth, come too, O black despair!
Support me, arm me, fill me with my wrongs!
Sustain this feeble spirit! Yes, my father,
But for thy share in this sad tale of shame,
I think I could have borne it.
Guild Thou hast a brother;
He shall assert thy cause.
Em First strike me dead—
No, in the wild distraction of my spirit,
In this dread conflict of my breaking heart,
Hear my fond pleading—save me from that curse;
Thus I adjure thee by the dearest ties (*kneels*)
Which link society; by the sweet names
Of parent and of child; by all the joys
These tender chains have yielded, I adjure thee
Breathe not this fatal secret to my brother;
Let him not know his sister was refused!
O, spare me that consummate, perfect ruin!
Conceive the mighty wo—I cannot speak:
And tremble to become a childless father.
[*Exit* EMMELINA.
Guild What art thou, life? thou lying vanity!
Thou promiser, who never mean'st to pay!
This beating storm will crush my feeble age!
Yet let me not complain; I have a son,
Just such a son as heaven in mercy gives,
When it would bless supremely; he is happy;
His ardent wishes will this day be crown'd;
He weds the maid he loves; in him, at least,
My soul will yet taste comfort—See, he's here;
He seems disorder'd

Enter RIVERS (*not seeing* GUILDFORD)

Riv. Yes, I fondly thought
Not all the tales which malice might devise,
Not all the leagues combined hell might form,
Could shake her steady soul
Guild. What means my son?
Where is thy bride?
Riv. O, name her not!
Guild. Not name her?
Riv No, if possible, not think of her;
Would I could help it!—Julia! oh, my Julia!
Curse my fond tongue! I said I would not name [her;
I did not think to do it, but my heart
Is full of her idea; her lov'd image
So fills my soul, it shuts out other thoughts;

My lips resolving not to frame the sound,
Dwell on her name, and all my talk is Julia!
Guild. 'Tis as it should be; ere the midnight bell
Sound in thy raptured ear, this charming Julia
Will be thy wife.
Riv. No.
Guild. How?
Riv. She has refused.
Guild. Sayst thou?
Riv. She has.
Guild. Why, who would be a father!
Who that could guess the wretchedness it brings,
But would entreat of heaven to write him childless!
Riv. 'Twas but a little hour ago we parted,
As happy lovers should; but when again
I sought her presence, with impatient haste,
Told her the priest, the altar, all was ready;
She blushed, she wept, and vowed it could not be;
That reasons of importance to our peace
Forbade the nuptial rites to be performed
Before to-morrow.
Guild. She consents to-morrow!
She but defers the marriage, not declines it.
Riv. Mere subterfuge! mere female artifice!
What reason should forbid our instant union?
Wherefore to-morrow? wherefore not to-night?
What difference could a few short hours have made?
Or if they could, why not avow the cause?
Guild I have grown old in camps, have lived in courts;
The toils of bright ambition have I known,
Woo'd greatness and enjoy'd it, till disgust
Follow'd possession; still I fondly look'd
Through the false perspective for distant joy,
Hop'd for the hour of honourable ease,
When, safe from all the storms and wrecks of fate,
My shatter'd bark at rest, I might enjoy
An old man's blessings, liberty and leisure,
Domestic happiness and smiling peace
The hour of age indeed is come! I feel it;
Feel it in all its sorrows, pains, and cares;
But where, oh where's th' untasted peace it promis'd? [*Exit* GUILDFORD
Riv. I would not deeper wound my father's peace;
But hide the secret cause of my resentment,
Till all be known; and yet I know too much.
It must be so—his grief, his sudden parting:
Fool that I was, not to perceive at once—
But friendship blinded me, and love betray'd
Bertrand was right, he told me she was changed,
And would, on some pretence, delay the marriage;
I hop'd 'twas malice all.—Yonder she comes,
Dissolved in tears; I cannot see them fall,
And be a man; I will not, dare not meet her;
Her blandishments would sooth me to false peace,
And if she asked it, I should pardon all. [*Exit.*

Enter JULIA.

Julia. Stay, Rivers! stay, barbarian! hear me speak!
Return, inhuman!—best belov'd! return:
Oh. I will tell thee all, restore thy peace,
Kneel at thy feet, and sue for thy forgiveness.
He hears me not- -alas! he will not hear.
Break, thou poor heart, since Rivers is unkind.

Enter ORLANDO.

Or. Julia in tears!
Julia. Alas! you have undone me!
Behold the wretched victim of her promise!
I urged, at your request, the fatal suit
Which has destroy'd my peace; Rivers suspects me,
And I am wretched!
Or. Better 'tis to weep
A temporary ill, than weep for ever;
That anguish must be mine.
Julia. Ha! weep for ever!
Can they know wretchedness, who know not love?
Or Not love! oh cruel friendship! tyrant honour!
Julia. Friendship! alas, how cold art thou to love!
Or. Too well I know it; both alike destroy me,
I am the slave of both, and, more than either,
The slave of honour.
Julia If you then have felt
The bitter agonies—
Or. Talk you of agonies?
You who are lov'd again! No! they are mine,
Mine are the agonies of hopeless passion;
Yes, I do love—I dote, I die for love!
(*falls at her feet.*) Julia!
Julia. How?
Or Nay, never start—I know I am a villain!
I know thy hand is destin'd to another,
That other too my friend, that friend the man
To whom I owe my life! Yes, I adore thee;
Spite of the black ingratitude, adore thee;
I dote upon my friend, and yet betray him;
I'm bound to Emmelina, yet forsake her;
I honour virtue, while I follow guilt;
I love the noble Rivers more than life,
But Julia more than honour.
Julia. Hold! astonishment
Has seal'd my lips; whence sprung this monstrous daring?
Or. (*rises.*) From despair.
Julia. What can you hope from me?
Or. Hope! nothing.
I would not aught receive, aught hope but death.
Think'st thou I need reproach? think'st thou I need
To be reminded that my love's a crime?
That every moral tie forbids my passion?
But though I know that heaven has plagues in store,
Yet mark—I do not, will not, can't repent;
I do not even wish to love thee less;
I glory in my crime: pernicious beauty!
Come, triumph in thy power, complete my woes;
Insult me with the praises of my rival,
The man on earth—whom most I ought to love!
Julia. I leave thee to remorse, and to that penitence
Thy crime demands. (*going.*)
Or. A moment stay.
Julia. I dare not.
Or. Hear all my rival's worth, and all my guilt.
The unsuspecting Rivers sent me to thee,
To plead his cause; I basely broke my trust,
And, like a villain, pleaded for myself.
Julia. Did he? Did Rivers? Then he loves me still—
Quick let me seek him out.

Or. (*takes out the dagger.*) First take this dagger;
Had you not forced it from my hand to-day,
I had not liv'd to know this guilty moment;
Take it, present it to the happy Rivers;
Tell him to plunge it in a traitor's heart;
Tell him his friend, Orlando, is that traitor;
Tell him Orlando forg'd the guilty tale;
Tell him Orlando was the only foe
Who at the altar would have murder'd Rivers,
And then have died himself

Julia. Farewell—repent—think better [*Exit* JULIA

(*As she goes out, he still looks after her*)

Enter RIVERS.

Riv. Turn, villain, turn!

Or. Ha! Rivers here?

Riv. Yes, Rivers.

Or. Gape wide, thou friendly earth, for ever hide me!
Rise Alps, ye crushing mountains, bury me!

Riv. Nay, turn, look on me

Or. Rivers! oh, I cannot,
I dare not, I have wrong'd thee.

Riv. Doubly wrong'd me;
Thy complicated crimes cry out for vengeance

Or Take it.

Riv. But I would take it as a man.
Draw (RIVERS *draws*)

Or. Not for a thousand worlds

Riv Not fight?
Why, thou'rt a coward too as well as villain:
I shall despise as well as hate thee

Or. Do,
Yet wrong me not, for if I am a coward
'Tis but to thee. there does not breathe the [man,
Thyself excepted, who durst call me so,
And live; but, oh! 'tis sure to heaven and thee,
I am the veriest coward guilt e'er made
Now, as thou art a man, revenge thyself;
Strike!

Riv. No, not stab thee like a base assassin,
But meet thee as a foe.

Or. Think of my wrongs.

Riv. I feel them here

Or. Think of my treachery.

Riv. Oh, wherefore wast thou false? how have I lov'd thee!

Or Of that no more: think of thy father's [grief,
Of Emmelina's wrongs—

Riv. Provoke me not.

Or. Of Julia—

Riv. Ha! I shall forget my honour,
And do a brutal violence upon thee,
Would tarnish my fair fame Villain and cow- [ard!
Traitor! will nothing rouse thee?

Or. (*drawing*) Swelling heart!
Yet this I have deserv'd, all this, and more.

As they prepare to fight, enter EMMELINA *hastily*

Em. Lend me your swiftness, lightnings—'tis too late
See, they're engaged—oh no—they live, both [live!
Hold, cruel men!

Riv. Unlucky! 'tis my sister.

Em. Ye men of blood! if yet you have not [lost
All sense of human kindness, love, or pity:
If ever you were dear to one another;
If ever you desire or look for mercy,
When, in the wild extremity of anguish,
You supplicate that Judge who has declared
That vengeance is his own—oh, hear me now;
Hear a fond wretch, whom misery has made bold; [souls.
Spare, spare each other's life—spare your own

Or. (*to* RIVERS) Thou shouldst have struck at once! O, tardy hand! [curtail'd?

Em Does death want engines? is his power
Has fell disease forgotten to destroy?
Are there not pestilence and spotted plagues,
Devouring deluges, consuming fires,
Earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes, and famine,
That man must perish by the hand of man?
Nay, to complete the horror, friend by friend?

Riv What! shall I then endure this outrage tamely? [love

Em No—If you covet death; if you're in
With slaughter and destruction—does not war
Invite you to her banner? Far and wide
Her dire dominion reaches—There seek death.
There fall without a crime. There, where no [hate,
No individual rage, no private wrong,
Arms man against his brother.—Not as here,
Where *both* are often *murderers* in the *act;*
In the *foul purpose—always*.

Riv Is honour nothing?

Em Honour! O, yes, I know him. 'Tis a phantom;
A shadowy figure wanting bulk and life,
Who, having nothing solid in himself,
Wraps his thin form in Virtue's plunder'd robe,
And steals her title Honour! 'tis the fiend
Who feeds on orphans' tears and widows' groans,
And slakes his impious thirst in brothers' blood.
Honour! why, 'tis the primal law of hell!
The grand device to people the dark realms
With noble spirits, who, but for this curst honour,
Had been at peace on earth, or bless'd in heaven.
With this *false* honour, Christians have no com- [merce.
Religion disavows, and truth disowns it

Or (*throws away his sword*) An angel speaks, and angels claim obedience

Riv (*to* ORLANDO) This is the heart thou hast wrong'd

Em (*comes up to* ORLANDO.) I pity thee;
Calamity has taught me how to pity:
Before I knew distress, my heart was hard;
But now it melts at every touch of wo;
And wholesome sufferings bring it back to virtue.
Rivers, he once was good and just like thee:
Who shall be proud, and think he stands secure,
If thy Orlando's false?

Riv. Think of his crime.

Em. Oh, think of his temptation! think 'twas Julia;
Thy heart could not resist her; how should *his*?
It is the very error of his friendship
Your souls were fram'd so very much alike,
He could not choose but to love whom Rivers lov'd [like this?

Or. Think'st thou there is in death a pang
Strike, my brave friend! be sudden and be [silent.
Death, which is terrible to happy men,
To me will be a blessing: I have lost [friend;
All that could make life dear; I've lost my

I've stabb'd the peace of mind of that fair crea-
I have surviv'd my honour : this is dying ! [ture,
The mournful fondness of officious love
Will plant no thorns upon my dying pillow;
No precious tears embalm my memory,
But curses follow it

Em. See, Rivers melts ;
He pities thee.

Or. I'll spare thy noble heart
The pain of punishing ; Orlando's self
Revenges both

(*Goes to stab himself with the dagger*)

Em. Barbarian ! kill me first.

Riv. (*snatching the dagger.*) Thou shalt not die ! I swear I love thee still :
That secret sympathy which long has bound us,
Pleads for thy life with sweet but strong entreaty.
Thou shalt repair the wrongs of that dear saint,
And be again my friend.

Or. Oh, hear me,

Em. No.
I cannot stoop to live on charity,
And what but charity is love compell'd ?
I've been a weak, a fond, believing woman,
And credulous beyond my sex's softness.
But with the weakness, I've the pride of woman.
I loved with virtue, but I fondly loved ;
That passion fixed my fate, determined all,
And marked at once the colour of my life
Hearts that love well, love long ; they love but once. [mine,
My peace thou hast destroyed, my honour's
She who aspired to gain Orlando's heart,
Shall never owe Orlando's hand to pity.

[*Exit* EMMELINA

Or. (*after a pause*) And I still live !

Riv Farewell ! should I stay longer
I might forget my vow.

Or. Yet hear me, Rivers

[*Exit* RIVERS, ORLANDO *following*

Enter BERTRAND *on the other side.*

Ber. How's this ? my fortune fails me, both alive !
I thought by stirring Rivers to this quarrel,
There was at least an equal chance against him
I work invisibly, and, like the tempter,
My agency is seen in its effects.
Well, ***honest*** Bertrand ! now for Julia's letter.
(*Takes out a letter*) This fond epistle of a love-sick maid,
I've sworn to give, but did not swear to whom.
"Give it my love," said she, "my dearest lord!"
Rivers, she meant ; there's no address—that's lucky.
Then where's the harm ! Orlando is a lord
As well as Rivers, loves her too as well.
(***Breaks open the letter.***) I must admire your style—your pardon, fair one
(***Runs over it***) I tread in air—methinks I brush the stars, [me—
And spurn the subject world which rolls beneath
There's not a word but fits Orlando's case
As well as Rivers';—tender to excess— [less;
No name—'twill do ; his faith in me is bound-
Then, as the brave are still, he's unsuspecting,
And credulous beyond a woman's weakness.
(*Going out he spies the dagger.*) Orlando's dagger ! ha ! 'ti greatly thought.
This may do noble service ; such a scheme !
My genius catches fire ! the bright idea
Is formed at once, and fit for instant action.

[*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE—*The Garden.*

Ber. 'Twas here we were to meet ; where does he stay ?
This compound of strange contradicting parts,
Too flexible for virtue, yet too virtuous
To make a flourishing, successful villain !
Conscience ! be still, preach not remorse to me ;
Remorse is for the luckless, failing villain.
He who succeeds repents not ; penitence
Is but another name for ill success.
Was Nero penitent when Rome was burnt ?
No ; but had Nero been a petty villain,
Subject to laws and liable to fear,
Nero perchance had been a penitent.
He comes.—This paper makes him all my own

Enter ORLANDO

Or. At length this wretched, tempest-beaten bark
Seems to have found its haven : I'm resolved ;
My wavering principles are fixed to honour ;
My virtue gathers force, my mind grows strong,
I feel an honest confidence within,
A precious earnest of returning peace

Ber Who feels secure, stands on the verge of ruin. (*Aside*)
Trust me, it joys my heart to see you thus :
What have I not attempted for your sake !
My love for you has warped my honest nature,
And friendship has infringed on higher duties.

Or It was a generous fault.

Ber Yet 'twas a fault.
Oh for a flinty heart that knows no weakness,
But moves right onward, unseduc'd by friend-
And all the weak affections ! [ship,

Or. Hear me, Bertrand !
This is my last farewell ; absence alone
Can prop my stagg'ring virtue

Ber You're resolv'd :
Then Julia's favours come too late

Or. What favours ?

Ber. Nay, nothing. I renounce these weak affections ;
They have misled us both I too repent,
And will return the letter back to Julia

Or Letter ! what letter ? Julia write to me
I will not see it. What would Rivers say ?
Bertrand ! he sav'd my life ;—I will not see it

Ber I do not mean you should. nay, I refus'd
To bring it you

Or. Refus'd to bring the letter ?

Ber. Yes, I refus'd at first

Or. Then thou ***hast*** brought it !
My faithful Bertrand !—come.

Ber. 'Twere best not see it.

Or. Not see it ! how ! not read my Julia's letter !
An empire should not bribe me to forbear.
Come, come.

Ber. Alas, how frail is human virtue!
My resolution melts, and though I mean not
To trust you with the letter, I must tell you
With what a thousand, thousand charms she gave it [it,
"Take this," said she, "and, as Orlando reads
Attend to every accent of his voice;
Watch every little motion of his eye,
Mark if it sparkles when he talks of Julia;
If when he speaks, poor Julia be the theme,
If when he sighs, his bosom heave for Julia
Note every trifling act, each little look,
For, oh! of what importance is the least
To those who love like me!"

Or. Delicious poison!
O how it taints my soul! give me the letter
(BERTRAND *offers it.* ORLANDO *refuses*.)
Ha! where's the virtue which but now I boasted!
'Tis lost, 'tis gone—conflicting passions tear me
I am again a villain Give it—no:
A spark of honour strikes upon my soul.
Take back the letter; take it back, good Ber-
Spite of myself compel me to be just. [trand!
I will not read it

Ber How your friend will thank you!
Another day makes Julia his for ever
Even now the great pavilion is prepar'd;
There will the nuptial rites be solemnized.
Julia already dress'd in bridal robes,
Like some fair victim—

Or O, no more, no more
What can she write to me?

Ber Some prudent counsel

Or. Then wherefore fear to read it? come, I'll venture;
What wondrous harm can one poor letter do?
The letter—quick—the letter

Ber Since you force me (*Gives it*.)

Or Be firm, ye shivering nerves! It is her hand [you this
(*Reads*.) "To spare my blushes, Bertrand brings
How have you wrong'd me! you believ'd me false; [you
'Twas my compassion for your friend deceiv'd
Meet me at midnight in the great pavilion,
But shun till then my presence; from that hour
My future life is yours; your once-lov'd friend
I pity and esteem, but you alone
Possess the heart of Julia"
This to me!
I dream, I rave, 'tis all Elysium round me,
And thou, my better angel! this to me!

Ber. I'm dumb; oh, Julia! what a fall is thine!

Or What, is it such a crime to love? away—
Thy moral comes too late; thou shouldst have
Thy scruple sooner, or not urg'd at all [urg'd
Thou shouldst—alas! I know not what I say—
But this I know, the charming Julia loves me,
Appoints a meeting at the dead of night!
She loves! the rest is all beneath my care

Ber. Be circumspect; the hour is just at hand;
Since all is ready for your purpos'd parting,
See your attendants be dispos'd aright,
Near the pavilion gate

Or. Why so?

Ber. 'Tis plain,
Julia must be the partner of your flight:
'Tis what she means, you must not mind her
A little gentle violence perhaps, [struggles;
To make her yield to what she had resolv'd,
And save her pride; she'll thank you for it after.

Or Take her by force? I like not that, O Bertrand,
There is a mutinous spirit in my blood,
That wars against my conscience Tell my Julia
I will not fail to meet her

Ber I obey.
Be near the garden; I shall soon return
[*Exit* BERTRAND.

Or. This giant sin, whose bulk so lately scared
Shrinks to a common size; I now embrace [me,
What I but lately fear'd to look upon
Why, what a progress have I made in guilt!
Where is the hideous form it lately wore?
It grows familiar to me, I can think,
Contrive, and calmly meditate on mischief,
Talk temp'rately of sin, and cherish crimes
I lately so abhorr'd, that had they once
But glanced upon the surface of my fancy
I had been terrified Oh, wayward conscience!
Too tender for repose, too sear'd for penitence!
[*Exit* ORLANDO.

Scene changes to another part of the Garden—A grand Pavilion—The Moon shining.

Enter RIVERS, *in a melancholy attitude.*

Riv. Ye lovely scenes of long-remember'd bliss!
Scenes which I hop'd were fated to bestow
Still dearer blessings in a beauteous bride!
Thou gay pavilion, which art dress'd so fair
To witness my espousals, why, ah, why
Art thou adorn'd in vain? Yet still I court thee,
For Julia lov'd thee once —dear, faithless Julia!
Yet is she false? Orlando swore she was not;
It may be so, yet she avoids my presence,
Keeps close from every eye, but most from mine.

Enter ORLANDO

Or. Ah! Rivers here? would I had shunn'd his walks!
How shall I meet the man I mean to wrong?

Riv. Why does Orlando thus expose his
To this cold air? [health

Or I ask the same of Rivers?

Riv Because this solitude, this silent hour,
Feeds melancholy thoughts, and sooths my
My Julia will not see me. [soul.

Or. How?

Riv. She denies me
Admittance to her presence

Or (*aside*.) Then I'm lost,
Confirm'd a villain, now 'tis plain she loves me.

Riv She will not pardon me one single fault
Of jealous love, though thou hadst clear'd up all. [known.

Or Wait till to-morrow, all will then be

Riv. Wait till to-morrow! Look at that pavilion;
All was prepar'd; yes, I dare tell thee all,
For thou art honest now.

Or. (*aside*.) That wounds too deeply.

Riv Soon as the midnight bell gave the glad summons,

This dear pavilion had beheld her mine.

Or. All will be well to-morrow. (*aside.*) If I stay
I shall betray the whole.—Good night, my [Rivers.

Riv. Good night; go you to rest; I still shall walk. [*Exit* ORLANDO

Yes, I will trace her haunts; my too fond heart,
Like a poor bird that's hunted from its nest,
Dares not return, and knows not where to fix,
Still it delights to hover round the spot
Which lately held its treasure; eyes it still,
And with heart-breaking tenderness surveys
The scene of joys which never may return. [*Exit.*

Scene changes to another part of the garden.

Re-enter ORLANDO.

Or. Did he say rest? talk'd he of rest to me?
Can rest and guilt associate? but no matter,
I cannot now go back; then such a prize,
Such voluntary love, so fair, so yielding,
Would make archangels forfeit their allegiance!
I dare not think; reflection leads to madness.

Enter BERTRAND

Bertrand! I was not made for this dark work:
My heart recoils—poor Rivers!

Ber. What of Rivers?

Or. I've seen him.

Ber. Where?

Or. Before the great pavilion

Ber. (*aside.*) That's lucky, saves me trouble, were he absent,
Half of my scheme had failed

Or. He's most unhappy;
He wish'd me rest, spoke kindly to me, Bertrand;
How, how can I betray him?

Ber. He deceives you;
He's on the watch, else wherefore now abroad
At this late hour? beware of treachery.

Or I am myself the traitor

Ber Come, no more!
The time draws near, you know the cypress
'Tis dark [walk,

Or. The fitter for dark deeds like mine.

Ber. I have prepar'd your men; when the bell
Go into the pavilion; there you'll find [strikes
The blushing maid, who with faint screams perhaps
Will feign resentment. But you want a sword

Or. A sword!—I'll murder no one—why a sword? [take mine;

Ber. 'Tis prudent to be arm'd; no words,
There may be danger, Julia may be lost,
This night secures or loses her for ever
The cypress walk—spare none who look like spies.

Or. (*looking at the sword.*) How deeply is that soul involv'd in guilt,
Who dares not hold communion with its
Nor ask itself what it designs to do! [thoughts,
But dallies blindly with the gen'ral sin,
Of unexamin'd, undefin'd perdition!
[*Exit* ORLANDO

Ber. Thus far propitious fortune fills my sails,
Yet still I doubt his milkiness of soul;
My next exploit must be to find out Rivers,
And, as from Julia, give him a feign'd message,
To join her here at the pavilion gate;
There shall Orlando's well-arm'd servants meet him,
And take his righteous soul from this bad world.
If they should fail, his honest cousin Bertrand
Will help him onward in his way to heav'n.
Then this good dagger, which I'll leave beside him,
Will, while it proves the deed, conceal the doer;
'Tis not an English instrument of mischief,
And who'll suspect *good Bertrand* wore a dagger?
To clear me further, I've no sword—unarm'd—
Poor helpless Bertrand! Then no longer poor,
But Guildford's heir, and lord of these fair lands.
[*Exit* BERTRAND.

Enter ORLANDO *on the other side.*

Or. Draw thy dun curtain round, oh, night! black night!
Inspirer and concealer of foul crimes!
Thou wizard night! who conjur'st up dark thoughts, [guilt!
And mak'st him bold, who else would start at
Beneath thy veil the villain dares to act,
What in broad day he would not dare to think.
Oh, night! thou hid'st the dagger's point from men,
But canst thou screen the assassin from himself?
Shut out the eye of heav'n? extinguish conscience?
Or heal the wounds of honour? Oh, no, no, no!
Yonder she goes—the guilty, charming Julia!
My genius drives me on—Julia, I come.
(*Runs off*)

SCENE—*The Pavilion.*

An arched door, through which JULIA *and her maid come forward on the stage.*

Julia Not here? not come? look out, my faithful Anna.
There was a time—oh, time for ever dear!
When Rivers would not make his Julia wait
Perhaps he blames me, thinks the appointment
Too daring, too unlike his bashful Julia; [bold,
But 'twas the only means my faithful love
Devis'd, to save him from Orlando's rashness
I have kept close, refus'd to see my Rivers;
Now all is still, and I have ventured forth,
With this kind maid, and virtue for my guard.
Come, we'll go in, he cannot sure be long
(*They go into the pavilion.*)

Enter ORLANDO, *his sword drawn and bloody, his hair dishevelled.*

Or. What have I done? a deed that earns damnation!
Where shall I fly? ah! the pavilion door!
'Tis open—it invites me to fresh guilt;
I'll not go in—let that fallen angel wait,
And curse her stars as I do.
(*The midnight bell strikes*) Hark! the bell!
Demons of darkness, what a peal is that!
Again! 'twill wake the dead—I cannot bear it!
'Tis terrible as the last trumpet's sound!
That was the marriage signal! Powers of hell,
What blessings have I blasted! Rivers! Julia!
(JULIA *comes out.*)

Julia. My Rivers calls; I come, I come.—
Orlando!

Or. Yes,
Thou beautiful deceiver! 'tis that wretch.

Julia. That perjur'd friend.

Or. That devil!

Julia. I'm betrayed.
Why art thou here?

Or. Thou canst make ruin lovely,
Or I would ask, why didst thou bring me here?

Julia. I bring thee here?

Or. Yes, thou, bright falsehood! thou.

Julia. No, by my hopes of heaven! where is
Some crime is meant. [my Rivers?

Or. (*catches her hand.*) Julia! the crime is
done.
Dost thou not shudder? art thou not amaz'd?
Art thou not cold and blasted with my touch?
Is not thy blood congeal'd? does no black horror
Fill thy presaging soul? look at these hands;
Julia! they're stain'd with blood; blood, Julia,
Nay, look upon them. [blood!

Julia Ah! I dare not. Blood!

Or. Yes, thou dear false one, with the noblest
That ever stain'd a dark assassin's hand. [blood
Had not thy letter with the guilty message
To meet thee here this hour, blinded my honour,
And wrought my passion into burning phrensy,
Whole worlds should not have bribed me.

Julia. Letter and message?
I sent thee none.

Or. Then Bertrand has betrayed me!
And I have done a deed beyond all reach,
All hope of mercy—I have murder'd Rivers.

Julia. Oh! (*She falls into her maid's arms.*)

Or. O rich reward which love prepares for
Thus hell repays its instruments! [murder!

Enter GUILDFORD, *with servants.*

Guild. Where is he?
Where is this midnight murderer? this assassin?
This is the place Orlando's servant nam'd.

Or. The storm comes on. 'Tis Guildford,
good old man!
Behold the wretch accurst of heaven and thee.

Guild. Accurst of both indeed. How, Julia
fainting!

Or. She's pure as holy truth; she was de-
And so was I. [ceiv'd,

Guild. Who tempted thee to this?

Or. Love, hell, and Bertrand.

Julia. (*recovering.*) Give me back my Rivers;
I will not live without him. Oh, my father!

Guild. Father! I'm none; I am no more a
father;
I have no child; my son is basely murder'd,
And my sweet daughter, at the fatal news,
Is quite bereft of reason.

Or. Seize me, bind me:
If death's too great a mercy, let me live:
Drag me to some damp dungeon's horrid gloom,
Deep as the centre, dark as my offences;
Come, do your office, take my sword; oh, Ber-
trand,
Yet, ere I perish, could it reach thy heart!
(*They seize* ORLANDO.)

Julia. I will not long survive thee, oh, my
Rivers!

Enter RIVERS *with the dagger.*

Riv. Who calls on Rivers with a voice so sad,
So full of sweetness?

Guild. Ah, my son!

Julia. 'Tis he, 'tis he!

JULIA *and* RIVERS *run into each other's arms.* ORLANDO *breaks from the guards, and falls on his knees.*

Or. He lives, he lives! the godlike Rivers
lives!
Hear it, ye host of heaven! witness, ye saints!
Recording angels, tell it in your songs;
Breathe it, celestial spirits, to your lutes,
That Rivers lives!

Julia. Explain this wondrous happiness?

Riv. 'Twas Bertrand whom Orlando killed;
the traitor
Has with his dying breath confess'd the whole.

Or. Good sword, I thank thee!

Riv. In the tangled maze
Orlando miss'd the path he was to take, [ceal'd
And pass'd through that where Bertrand lay con-
To watch th' event: Orlando thought 'twas me,
And that I play'd him false: the walk was dark.
In Bertrand's bloody hand I found this dagger,
With which he meant to take my life; but how
Were you alarm'd?

Guild. One of Orlando's men,
Whom wealth could never bribe to join in mur-

Or. Murder! I bribe to murder? [der—

Riv. No; 'twas Bertrand
Brib'd them to that curst deed; he lov'd my

Or. Exquisite villain! [sister.

Guild. Fly to Emmelina,
If any spark of reason yet remain,
Tell her the joyful news. Alas, she's here!
Wildly she flies! Ah, my distracted child!

Enter EMMELINA *distracted.*

Em. Off, off! I will have way! ye shall not
hold me:
I come to seek my lord; is he not here?
Tell me, ye virgins, have ye seen my love,
Or know you where his flocks repose at noon?
My love is comely—sure you must have seen
him;
'Tis the great promiser! who vows and swears;
The perjur'd youth! who deals in oaths and
breaks them.
In truth he might deceive a wiser maid
I lov'd him once; he then was innocent;
He was no murderer then, indeed he was not;
He had not kill'd my brother.

Riv. Nor has now;
Thy brother lives.

Em. I know it—yes, he lives
Among the cherubim. Murd'rers too will live;
But where? I'll tell you where—down, down,
down, down.
How deep it is! 'tis fathomless—'tis dark!
No—there's a pale blue flame—ah, poor Or-

Guild. My heart will burst. [lando!

Or. Pierce mine, and that will ease it.

Em. (*comes up to her father.*) I knew a maid
who lov'd—but she was mad—
Fond, foolish girl! Thank heav'n, I am not mad;

Yet the afflicting angel has been with me;
But do not tell my father, he would grieve;
Sweet, good old man—perhaps he'd weep to hear it:
I never saw my father weep but once;
I'll tell you when it was. I did not weep;
'Twas when—but soft, my brother must not know it.
'Twas when his poor fond daughter was refus'd.

Guild. Who can bear this?

Or. I will not live to bear it.

Em. (*comes up to* ORLANDO.) Take comfort, thou poor wretch! I'll not appear
Against thee, nor shall Rivers; but blood must,
Blood will appear; there's no concealing blood.
What's that? my brother's ghost—it vanishes;
(*Catches hold of* RIVERS.)
Stay, take me with thee, take me to the skies;
I have thee fast; thou shalt not go without me.
But hold—may we not take the murd'rer with us?
That look says—No. Why then I'll not go with thee.
Yet hold me fast—'tis dark—I'm lost—I'm gone. (*Dies.*)

Or. One crime makes many needful; this day's sin
Blots out a life of virtue. Good old man!
My bosom bleeds for thee; thy child is dead,
And I the cause. 'Tis but a poor atonement;
But I can make no other. (*Stabs himself.*)

Riv. What hast thou done?

Or. Fill'd up the measure of my sins. Oh, mercy!
Eternal goodness, pardon this last guilt!
Rivers, thy hand!—farewell! forgive me, heaven!
Yet is it not an act which bars forgiveness,
And shuts the door of grace for ever?—Oh!
(*Dies.*)

(*The curtain falls to soft music.*)

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY R. B. SHERIDAN, ESQ.—SPOKEN BY MR. LEE LEWES.

UNHAND me, gentlemen, by heaven, I say,
I'll make a ghost of him who bars my way.
[*Behind the scenes.*
Forth let me come—A poetaster true,
As lean as envy, and as baneful too;
On the dull audience let me vent my rage,
Or drive these female scribblers from the stage.
For scene or history, we've none but these,
The law of liberty and wit they seize;
In tragic—comic—pastoral—they dare to please.
Each puny bard must surely burst with spite,
To find that women with such fame can write;
But, oh, your partial favour is the cause,
Which feeds their follies with such full applause.
Yet still our tribe shall seek to blast their fame,
And ridicule each fair pretender's aim;
Where the dull duties of domestic life
Wage with the muse's toils eternal strife.
What motley cares Corilla's mind perplex,
While maids and metaphors conspire to vex!
In studious dishabille behold her sit,
A letter'd gossip, and a housewife wit;
At once invoking, though for different views,
Her gods, her cook, her milliner, and muse.
Round her strew'd room a frippery chaos lies,
A checker'd wreck of notable and wise;
Bills, books, caps, couplets, combs, a varied mass,
Oppress the toilet, and obscure the glass;
Unfinish'd here an epigram is laid,
And there a mantuamaker's bill unpaid:
Here newborn plays foretaste the town's applause,
There, dormant patterns pine for future gauze;
A moral essay now is all her care,
A satire next, and then a bill of fare:
A scene she now projects, and now a dish,
Here's act the first—and here—remove with fish.
Now while this eye in a fine phrensy rolls,
That, soberly casts up a bill for coals;
Black pins and daggers in one leaf she sticks,
And tears, and thread, and balls, and thimbles mix.
Sappho, 'tis true, long vers'd in epic song,
For years esteem'd all household studies wrong;
When dire mishap, though neither shame nor sin,
Sappho herself, and not her muse, lies in.
The virgin Nine in terror fly the bower,
And matron Juno claims despotic power;
Soon Gothic hags the classic pile o'erturn,
A caudle-cup supplants the sacred urn;
Nor books nor implements escape their rage,
They spike the inkstand, and they rend the page;
Poems and plays one barbarous fate partake,
Ovid and Plautus suffer at the stake,
And Aristotle's only sav'd—to wrap plumcake.
Yet, shall a woman tempt the tragic scene?
And dare—but hold—I must repress my spleen;
I see your hearts are pledg'd to her applause,
While Shakspeare's spirit seems to aid her cause;
Well pleas'd to aid—since o'er his sacred bier
A female hand did ample trophies rear,
And gave the greenest laurel that is worshipp'd there.

POEMS.

MORNING SOLILOQUY.

The following lines were written by Hannah More for her own use, in early life; but a copy having been given to a friend, the author was importuned to print it. She complied, and prefixed to the piece the following—

"As early rising is very conducive to health, and to the improvement of the mind in knowledge and piety, this soliloquy is designed to promote so important an end; and is recommended more particularly to young persons, as, by contracting a habit of rising early in the days of their youth, they would be less liable to depart from such a custom as they advance in life. The last stanza is expressive of the action of rising, in order that those who repeat it may have no excuse for not quitting their beds immediately."

Soft slumbers now mine eyes forsake,
My powers are all renew'd;
May my freed spirit too awake,
With heavenly strength endued!

Thou silent murderer Sloth, no more
My mind imprison'd keep;
Nor let me waste another hour
With thee, thou felon Sleep.

Hark, O my soul, could dying men
One lavish'd hour retrieve,
Though spent in tears, and pass'd in pain,
What treasures would they give!

But seas of pearl, and mines of gold,
Were offer'd them in vain;
Their pearl of countless price is lost,*
And where's the promis'd gain?

Lord, when thy day of dread account
For squander'd hours shall come,
Oh, let them not increase th' amount,
And swell the former sum!

* See Matthew xiii. 46.

Teach me in health each good to prize,
I, dying, shall esteem;
And every pleasure to despise
I then shall worthless deem.

For all thy wondrous mercies past
My grateful voice I raise,
While thus I quit the bed of rest
Creation's Lord to praise.

ON MR. SHAPLAND,

An eminent Apothecary in Bristol.

Wouldst thou inquire of him who sleeps beneath,
This tomb shall tell thee, 'tis no common dust,
That, crush'd at length by oft defeated death,
Fills the cold urn committed to its trust.

Stranger! this building fallen to decay,
Was once the dwelling of an honest mind—
A spirit cheerful as the light of day—
The soul of friendship—milk of human kind.

His art forbade th' expiring wretch to die,
Empower'd the nerveless tongue once more to speak,
Restor'd its lustre to the sunken eye,
And spread fresh roses on the livid cheek.

Each various duty bound on social man,
'Twas his with glowing duty to perform,
As crystal pure, his stream of conduct ran,
Unstain'd by folly, undisturb'd by storm.

With me, then, stranger! mourn departed worth;
Steel'd is the heart that can forbear to sigh;
Let deep regret call all thy sorrows forth—
Live as he liv'd—and fear not then to die.*

* Dr Stonhouse had the highest esteem for Mr. Shapland, who attended his family, as well as that of Mrs. More, even after he had left off general practice. Dr. Stonhouse, in 1789, presented to Mr. Shapland a piece of plate,"as a testimony of his gratitude for the restoration of health, through the blessing of God."

END OF VOL. I.